Problems of Communism

Essay-Reviews

J. Thomas Sanders
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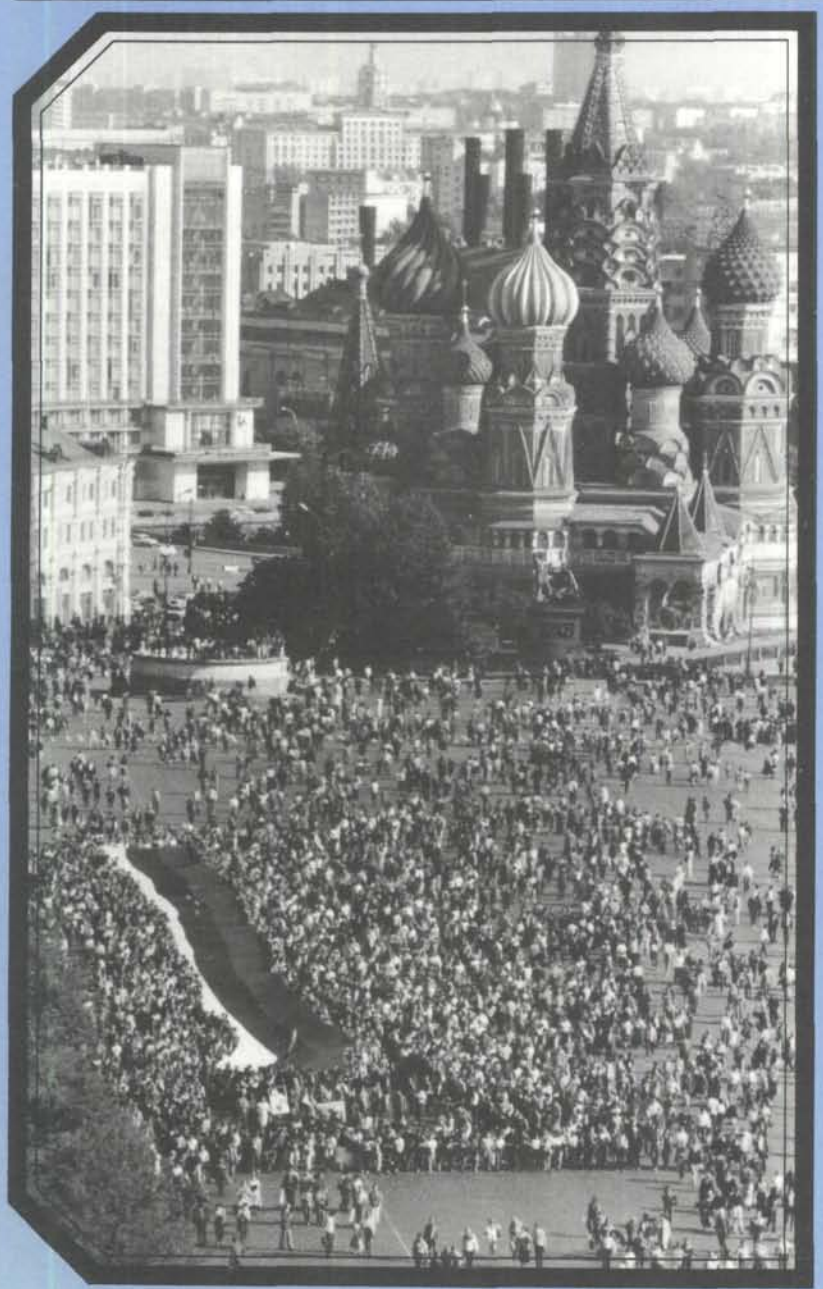
Richard J. Krickus
Joshua B. Spero

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1991



Moscow, August 1991 — The Coup de Grace: *A Symposium*

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Moscow and Cuba

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Georgia's Independence

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Central European Triangle

Rudolf L. Tőkés

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COVER: Red Square display of Russian flag marks the end of the August 1991 coup. Photo by Reuters/Bettmann.

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IN THIS ISSUE OF

Problems of Communism

Articles

Moscow, August 1991: The Coup de Grace—A Symposium

George W. Breslauer, William E. Odom, Anatole Shub, Mark R. Beissinger, Amy Knight, Anders Åslund, and Vernon V. Aspaturian analyze the salient aspects of the abortive Moscow coup of August 1991, and reflect on the political, economic, social, and foreign policy ramifications of the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

The Politics of Georgia's Independence

Darrell Slider

With the exception of the Baltic states, Georgia is one of the most independence-minded of the constituents of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The government of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, which in October 1990 was voted in to replace the Communists, faces the daunting tasks of uniting a fractured noncommunist political elite, managing an economy that is dependent on other republics, and dealing with aggravated sensitivities among Georgia's ethnic minorities, who fear that Georgians will dominate them once independence is achieved. Unless it succeeds on all these fronts, Georgia may find world acceptance of its independence hard to come by.

China and the Gulf Crisis: Escape from Predicaments

Yitzhak Shichor

During the Gulf war, China's old-guard leadership managed to exploit international instability to promote China's own interests—but not in a fundamental way. By adhering to a cautious, almost traditional policy, China did escape from a number of predicaments in its foreign policy, but it lost its opportunity to play more than a marginal role in world affairs in the process. The Chinese chose to go half the way, and they achieved half the results. A more central role in world affairs probably will only become possible for China when its current aging rulers are replaced by younger leaders who *are willing to do more than sit on the fence and watch the tigers fight.*

Moscow's Retreat from Cuba

Cole Blasier

For almost 30 years, the Soviet Union and Cuba maintained an exceptionally close relationship, notable for the size of Soviet aid and trade, the mutuality of international interests, and the interdependence of military policies. By 1990, however, the Soviet economic crisis had led Moscow to cut its aid program to Cuba to the bone. After the August 1991 coup, Moscow also moved to withdraw its military forces from Cuba. Fidel Castro now stands alone in the hemisphere. The question is whether his regime—with its economic system discredited and its foreign economic relations in ruins—can survive.

From Visegrád to Kraków: Cooperation, Competition, and Coexistence in Central Europe

Rudolf L. Tőkés

Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary now find themselves, as they have so many times in their history, in a "no man's land" between East and West. In response to this security dilemma, they inaugurated a trilateral alliance in Visegrád, Hungary, in February 1991. This alliance is to ensure the cooperation of the three countries in defending themselves against a continuing Soviet military threat as well as instability on their eastern borders. It is also to ensure that these countries cooperate in their efforts to "join Europe"; unfortunately, it is more likely that competition will characterize this aspect of their relations. The efforts these countries are making to link their economic, business, transportation, and communications policies are, however, as important. Indeed, the realization of this objective is the essential condition for the future harmonious cooperation among the "Triangle."

(Abstracts continued on reverse side)

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Essay-Reviews

Historical Consciousness and the Incorporation of the Soviet Past

J. Thomas Sanders

In the revolutionary period in which the Soviet peoples now find themselves, they have rushed to reject the totality of the Soviet experiment. Western Soviet studies, influenced by the anti-Sovietism now faddish in the Soviet Union, has also denied the validity of the Soviet past. However, in order to move forward and deal in an effective manner with the challenges facing the country, the Soviet peoples—members of the elite and masses alike—must embrace the recent past, not reject it. Western Soviet studies, freed from its own ideological presuppositions by the end of the cold war, could move to focus in a positive way on the enduring continuity of the Soviet historical experience and, in so doing, assist the Soviet peoples in reconciling in one whole the entirety of their past.

The Russian Revolution in Comparative Perspective

David B. Rivkin, Jr., and Lee A. Casey

Several recent books on three major European revolutions provide fresh perspective on the Russian Revolution and the options facing that revolution in its closing chapter. The Russian Revolution of October 1917 chose the course of willful violence and terror in a conscious emulation of the violence of the French Revolution, eschewing the peaceful course pursued in the Glorious Revolution of 1688 in England. In both the French and the Russian revolutions, political leaders resorted to violence when it became apparent that the public was not wholeheartedly accepting their vision of the future. It remains to be seen whether the aftermath of the aborted August 1991 coup in the Soviet Union will be a shift to the English path or a reversion to violent political change.

Nationalism and Baltic Independence

Richard J. Krickus

The two intellectual traditions that have dominated 20th-century political thought—liberalism and Marxism—have had notable difficulties in coming to grips with ethnicity and national consciousness. Each perspective views nationalism as the cause of intergroup conflict and bloody wars between nations. In the Baltic area, however, nationalism has recently played a positive role by inspiring Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians to organize to defend their languages, cultures, and religions against Soviet efforts to eradicate them. Thus, nationalism is the ultimate source of Baltic movements for independence, political democracy, and social pluralism.

Central European Security

Joshua B. Spero

The February 1991 summit in Visegrád, Hungary, of Polish President Lech Wałęsa, Czechoslovak President Václav Havel, and Hungarian Prime Minister József Antall marked the beginning of an entirely new kind of security mechanism. The so-called "Visegrád alliance" represents a concerted effort on the part of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary to overcome the animosities that have long plagued the Central European region, to integrate their region into the new Europe, to defend themselves from a still-potent Soviet threat, and to collaborate on foreign and military policies. This proactive stance will play a critical role in promoting the emergence of a stable security structure in both Central Europe and Europe as a whole.

Photo on opposite page: Boris Yel'tsin defies the coup in an August 19, 1991, speech from atop an armored personnel carrier outside the "White House," home of the Russian parliament. Photo by Reuters/Bettmann.

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Moscow, August 1991: The Coup de Grace

EDITORS' NOTE: In August 1991, the world stood aghast as a handful of hard-line political leaders staged a coup against the authority of Mikhail Gorbachev. The swift, bloodless collapse of this abortive "state of emergency" accelerated the very processes that the plotters hoped to block or reverse and effectively administered the coup de grace to seven decades of Bolshevik rule.

A distinguished group of experts offer herewith preliminary assessments of these events along a variety of analytic axes. George W. Breslauer, of the University of California (Berkeley), categorizes major changes in the Soviet political system resulting from the coup and its failure, including deflation of Gorbachev's status, dissolution of the empire, regional fragmentation, and activation of large political publics. Lt. Gen. William E. Odom, of the Hudson Institute (Arlington, VA), explores different perspectives on the coup and proposes an approach for studying future Soviet political development.

Anatole Shub, of the Research Office of the US Information Agency, depicts the August events as a "fourth Russian revolution," which revives the democratic legacy of the 1905 and February 1917 revolutions. Mark R. Beissinger, of the University of Wisconsin (Madison), describes the disintegration of the USSR as a unitary state and explores the bleak options for establishing some kind of successor political community. Amy Knight, of the US Library of Congress, highlights the role of Gorbachev-appointed officials in the "coup" against the Soviet President. Anders Åslund, of the Stockholm Institute of Soviet and East European Economics, describes the inept post-coup response to an accelerating economic crisis. Finally, Vernon V. Aspaturian, of The Pennsylvania State University (University Park), bids a farewell to "Soviet" foreign policy and examines the emergence of successor foreign policies pursued by the republics.

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Bursting the Dams: Politics and Society in the USSR Since the Coup

George W. Breslauer

THE abortive attempt to depose Mikhail Gorbachev and to impose martial law had consequences that appear to have altered the speed, scope, and, to a lesser extent, direction of change in the Soviet Union. In this brief essay, I will reflect upon some of those consequences, and their possible implications for economic and political liberalization. I will not, however, attempt to predict future events or changes in trajectory, for these are essentially unpredictable, given the turbulence, austerity, and identity vacuum in many parts of the country. Nor will I analyze the coup itself and the lessons it might hold for our understanding of the prior condition of state and society in the Soviet Union. Rather, on the basis of Radio Liberty, Sovset, and American newspaper reports covering the period August 20–October 18, 1991, I will categorize and interpret several major changes that have occurred as a result of the failure of the coup. What follows, therefore, is both a provisional interpretation and a sifting of very recent events, based necessarily on limited sources of information.

Gorbachev's Status Deflation

One realm that was altered fundamentally by the coup was leadership politics. Gorbachev returned to Moscow on August 21 in search of a political role. It was not clear at the time that a useful leadership role existed for him in the new situation. His distinctive political competence had been as a "radical centrist," mediating between the Left (the democrats) and the Center within the establishment, and playing them off against each other, while encouraging forces that would keep the political agenda moving in a radicalizing direction.[1] With the exception of a brief, six-month period (November 1990–April 1991), he followed a strategy of simultaneously: (1) protecting the Left against the forces of backlash; (2) fighting against the disestablishment of the party and state apparatuses; and (3) delivering the fence-sitters to the reformist cause.

But Gorbachev was ultimately overwhelmed by the rapidly growing polarization between revolutionary forces on the Left and reactionary forces on the Right. During April–August 1991, he sought to finesse a constitutional decentralization of the USSR, fighting behind the scenes for a federalist outcome, but proving willing in the end to submit to a more confederal arrangement. The right wing in the party, police, KGB, and military watched, appalled, as Gorbachev tried to exclude them from these negotiations. Two days before the scheduled signing of the new Union treaty, which would have effectively disestablished the central *nomenklatura*, its leading representatives made their move. The issue for them, as was reflected in the complete absence of Marxist terminology at the junta's press conference on August 20, and in its instructions to lower organs,[2] was not communism but statehood.

The coup itself demonstrated the limits of Gorbachev's political power, while the aftermath of its defeat

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[1] I have argued this point at greater length in George W. Breslauer, "Evaluating Gorbachev as Leader," *Soviet Economy* (Washington, DC), October-December 1989, pp. 299–340.

[2] See *Postfactum News Review* (Moscow), Aug. 24, 1991, Documents No. 10, 11, and 12.

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Mikhail Gorbachev speaks to a Soviet TV reporter upon his return to Moscow on August 22.

—Reuters/Bettmann.

placed additional limits on that power. He could not prevent the coup in the first place; and he himself did not defeat it. After he returned to Moscow and overcame his disorientation, he tried desperately to catch up with the new levels of radicalism, assertiveness, and popular authority of the forces led by Boris Yel'tsin. But by agreeing to disestablish the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to allow radicals to purge and restructure the KGB, MVD, and armed forces, and to permit the revolutionaries to dominate elite politics, Gorbachev acceded to the liquidation of his main conservative constituencies, and of the political institutions within which he previously exercised patronage power. That done, he lost his ability to serve as a bridge between or liaison among equally weighted, established political forces. In this situation, his skills were apparently no longer valued. He could not protect the central institutions against the revolutionaries, and he was no longer needed to deliver conservatives and fence-sitters to the cause of *perestroyka*.

But Gorbachev worked feverishly to find a political niche to fill. Agreeing to embrace the program of the revolutionaries, he still hoped to recoup authority by presenting himself as a stabilizing force. As it turned out, his presence and, to a lesser extent, his skills were still needed by the democrats, who discovered quickly that Gorbachev could play a role that was still important to them. Very shortly after the defeat of the coup, Yel'tsin's comments about border changes among the republics, which were probably meant both to deter rampant secessionism and to reassure (and thereby keep in place) many of the 30 million Russians living in other republics, instead had the opposite effect. They legitimized secessionist tendencies by reinforcing fears within the republics that the vacuum of central authority would be filled by the Russian republic.

This reaction made it clear to Yel'tsin and his associates that for them to act simultaneously and assertively as advocates of their republic's interests, protectors of Russian "settlers" in other republics, and leaders of the USSR could exacerbate centrifugal forces immensely. And while they were rhetorically committed to dissolution of the Soviet Union, they also believed that both *total* disintegration and *an uncontrolled pace* of disintegration were undesirable outcomes. Such concerns were evident, not only in statements by Yel'tsin, but also in comments by fellow democrats Anatoliy Sobchak, Gavriil Popov, and Sergey Stankevich shortly after the coup was defeated.[3] However, for them to take the lead in bucking the disintegrative tide could also force them to take actions that could compromise their democratic credentials.

This dilemma created new roles—or redefined old ones—for Gorbachev: as defender of the center's residual military, political, and economic interests; as an official with international standing who could speak for the country as a whole and perhaps secure foreign assistance; as facilitator and mediator among leaders of the republics; and as a leader whose rhetorical commitment to proceduralism and constitutionalism (a "law-based state") could help regulate the pace and extent of both disintegration and retribution. Unfortunately for President Gorbachev, these roles would have to be played without using the raw political muscle he could previously employ to persuade skeptics of the veracity of his arguments. That is, he would have to rely on his stature, on his analytical, rhetorical, and persuasive skills, and on the force of his personality to perform these functions. Given that both Gorbachev and the forces surrounding Yel'tsin agreed that these functions needed to be performed, Gorbachev's unique repertoire of personal skills and political credit abroad was needed to advance common goals.

In a similar vein, the democrats could have had a further motive for bolstering Gorbachev's political standing once he embraced their program. Speaking for the country as a whole entails acceptance of a certain mea-

[3]See Bill Keller, "Collapse of an Empire," *The New York Times*, Aug. 27, 1991; and Roman Solchanyk, "Ukraine and Russia: Before and After the Coup," Radio Liberty, *Report on the USSR* (Munich), Sept. 27, 1991, pp. 13–17.

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sure of responsibility for results. To the extent that Yel'tsin alone dominated the public face of central power, he would become the focus for the fulfillment (or nonfulfillment) of expectations to a far greater extent than he had been previously. During his meteoric political resurrection and rise, from early 1989 through the June 1991 Russian republic presidential elections, he had been able to harvest "anti-center" alienation. And, of course, during the coup itself, he harvested anti-restorationist alienation and gained almost mythical authority associated with his defiance. He has been, in other words, a charismatic figure whose charisma derived from his successful, by traditional standards truly "magical," defiance of the old regime. His was not a political comeback; it was a political resurrection.

Yet, as Weber observed, charisma is not a currency that one can hoard. It must be periodically revalidated by acts of apparent magic.[4] Yel'tsin's taking over as de facto leader of the country would switch the source of his authority from defiance of the old regime to his ability to prevent chaos, implement marketization of the economy, and pull the country out of its deep crisis. If Yel'tsin could use Gorbachev as the public face of national leadership to help contain the most threatening centrifugal tendencies (if they could be contained at all), it would allow Yel'tsin to avoid excessive immediate responsibility for results.

Apparently, Yel'tsin is ambivalent about entirely ceding to Gorbachev the public face of national power. Either for personal reasons (for example, animosity), or for political ones (for example, to regenerate his charisma and to ensure a dominant role for the Russian republic in negotiations over future power arrangements), or for idealistic reasons (for example, aversion to chaos), Yel'tsin is not content to operate in Gorbachev's shadow. Perhaps this explains Yel'tsin's visit to Armenia and Azerbaijan (September 22–24), when he teamed with President Nursultan Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan to mediate the seemingly intractable dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh. Successful mediation would certainly be widely perceived as a magical act, could encourage leaders of other republics to hitch their star to Yel'tsin's, and could set precedents for defusing other conflicts (including analogous regional conflicts within the Russian federation). Also, it is not something that Gorbachev could have accomplished.

If this is Yel'tsin's strategy, it is only one for buying political time, for Yel'tsin will still be responsible for results within the Russian republic itself, now that he can no longer blame central institutions for blocking reforms. In the short term, he may be able to finesse this problem by focusing public attention on local bureaucratic interference with the implementation of whatever program for economic transformation is enacted. Thus, in the near term, he may reinforce his populist credentials and continue to harvest anti-bureaucratic alienation. But eventually, after his "honeymoon" is over, he will have to produce results. In the meantime, Gorbachev performs functions that Yel'tsin is probably grateful not to have to perform himself, even as Yel'tsin maneuvers to reinforce his political hegemony, and occasionally evens the personal score with Gorbachev by humiliating Mikhail Sergeyevich in public.

Gorbachev's political standing and leverage could rise as this game is played out. In the newly created State Council, made up of representatives of ten republics plus Gorbachev, and within some of the other new state committees within which each republic has a vote, the dynamics of group decision-making could turn Gorbachev into a defender of the republics that fear Yel'tsin's enormous power and occasional tendency to flex his muscles. Rather than ally with a seeming winner, leaders of some republics could seek to balance Yel'tsin's assertiveness by teaming against him within closed circles, at least on some issues. Gorbachev would, under those circumstances, be a natural figure around whom to rally, especially given his image as protector of constitutionalism, proceduralism, "balance," and compromise.

Having said all this, it is important to bear in mind that we are observing a political process that is turbulent, uninstitutionalized, heavily weighted toward charisma and personality, and hostage to explosive events on the ground that could again change the political equation at any time. These are the least propitious circumstances for forecasting the trajectory, let alone the specifics, of events.[5] A breakdown in Yel'tsin's or, to a lesser extent, Gorbachev's health (or, of course, their assassinations) could change things markedly, as could prolonged wildcat strikes or riots due to lack of food or fuel, or large-scale attacks on Russians in, say, Ukraine or Kazakhstan. Moreover, tendencies to balance the political weight of the Russian republic within state councils need not take the form of teaming with Gorbachev and reinforcing central authority; they could as easily reinforce centrifugal tendencies that re-

[4]Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, New York, The Free Press, 1964, pp. 358 ff.

[5]As Agnus Heller remarked about Eastern Europe after the revolutions of 1989: "Politics is entirely unpredictable if the institutional framework of political actions and decisions remains fluid and unstable. There are too many free parameters to reckon with, as well as too many irrational, purely contingent events and acts lying in wait." Cited in "A Survey of Opinion on the East European Revolution," *East European Politics and Societies* (Berkeley, CA), Spring 1990, pp. 172–73.

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ject both all-Union and Russian authority. Whether or not this takes place could hinge on personality factors, or on political pressures within given republics. Hence, while obvious changes in leadership politics as a result of the coup have been the ascendancy of Yel'tsin over Gorbachev and Gorbachev's embrace of the revolutionary program, the future of this alliance, and of Yel'tsin's and Gorbachev's authority, are highly contingent matters.

Imperial Dissolution

Let me now turn to the impact of the coup on the juridical integrity of the USSR. Here, too, it is obvious that the defeat of the coup ushered in a fundamental change. Although the Union treaty that was to have been signed in August would have created more of a confederal than a federal system, with a relatively weak center and constitutional processes through which a less difficult exit from the Union would have been made possible, that treaty became obsolete in the wake of the coup. With the disestablishment of the CPSU and the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, and the political defeat of centralist institutions of coercion (the KGB, the old guard within the military, and the USSR MVD), we have witnessed a temporary end to the political clout of those who were willing and able to use violence to protect the last bastions of Soviet statehood. In addition, republic leaderships feared another coup attempt, and Yel'tsin's statements after the coup prompted concern over renewed Russian hegemony. These factors, combined with the opportunities created by the vacuum in central authority and by the democratic values of the victors, created a situation in which many republic leaders came under pressure to bolt for the exits.

Under these circumstances, Gorbachev, Yel'tsin, and others wisely decided to ride the wave rather than to fight it. Majority-supported, intense secessionism of a mobilized ethnic group within its historical territory is extraordinarily difficult to contain. It can be crushed through the overwhelming use of force, but one must have faith in the reliability of the troops. The Israelis have contained the Palestinians only at a high cost and due to the latter's being a specific, isolated target group, and to the Israelis' possession of a relatively unified "center," a strong state, and a reliable, ethnically homogeneous army.[6] Moscow lacks these advantages, all the more so after defeat of the coup. Moreover, some believe that ethnic-based separatism is an emotion that has to be played out before it can be tempered.[7] Sober calculation of economic and political interests, for example, is unlikely to take place under such circumstances, much less override the force of separatism.

The defeat of the coup brought to power in Moscow individuals who were willing to drop procedural and constitutional restraints and to accommodate temporarily to reality. They wisely freed the Baltic republics, conceded that, in principle, others could leave if they wished (while fudging on matters of timing and procedure), and began new negotiations to define the kinds of associative relationships that would remain or develop among the fragments of a fragmented empire. They scrapped the old Union treaty, announced that the country would henceforth be a "Union of Sovereign States" (not "Republics"), and sought to focus attention on how representatives of those states would define common interests in all major policy realms: economic, political, military. Hard bargaining lies ahead, and probably many surprises. But the salient consequence of the coup's defeat was to break the dam holding back a spontaneous, albeit partial, dismemberment of the empire.

Regional Fragmentation

The process of imperial dissolution has been accompanied as well by an accelerated process of regional fragmentation, which has taken many forms, some of which have been in progress for about three years.[8] One such form has been to increase the material assets under republic authority. Thus, in addition to declaring their "independence" from the USSR,[9] many republics have taken the opportunity to disestablish and seize the assets of republic communist parties, the secret police, and other apparatuses of control, to subordinate organs of central institutions to republic authority, and/or to demand the withdrawal of Soviet Army troops from their territories. Many republics and regions have begun to establish National Guards, "Home Guards," and/or national armies.[10]

In some cases (for example, the Baltic states, Kirgizia [now Kyrgyzstan], Armenia, Ukraine), these efforts have been undertaken in the service of both breaking Moscow's control and advancing processes of democ-

[6]See Ian Lustick, *Arabs in the Jewish State,* Austin, TX, University of Texas Press, 1976.

[7]Personal communication from Ernst B. Haas.

[8]See Joseph Brandt, "Economic Reform and the Soviet National Question," *Telos* (New York), Summer 1990, pp. 58–68.

[9]Not all republics have declared their independence, and among those that have done so, different leaders mean different things by the term. At one extreme the term stands for totally independent statehood, on the Baltic model. At the other extreme the term means "home rule" within a larger juridical entity.

[10]In Azerbaijan, the authorities have even laid claim to all the assets of the Soviet Army now located on republic territory.

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ratization at the republic level, through the further demonopolization of political power. In other cases (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan), the process of disestablishment has been geared primarily toward breaking Moscow's powers of control, and transferring additional instruments of control to republic strongmen. Typically, but not always, those strongmen use the preexisting apparatuses of power (now with new names) to prevent local de-monopolization and pluralization. And in other cases (such as the Russian republic), the trend has combined both tendencies, with de-monopolization and pluralization accompanied by efforts to consolidate executive authority in the capital of the republic.[11]

Regional fragmentation has also taken the form of accelerated pursuit of regional autonomy or particularism *within* the republics. Rising demands for republic independence from Moscow have heightened demands by disaffected minorities within those republics for autonomy from republic control. Within the Russian republic, for example, political mobilization has accelerated on behalf of real autonomy or independence for a number of "autonomous" republics: Checheno-Ingushetia, Tatarstan, North Ossetia, Buryatia, Mordovia, Kabardino-Balkaria. Within Ukraine, centrifugal pressures in western Ukraine have increased, while the Crimean oblast soviet has voted to secede from the republic. Within Moldova, the battle with both Russian and Gagauz minorities intensified sharply. Within Kazakhstan, Russian settlers in the north became more restless in response to the rise in Kazakh national consciousness. Other examples could be cited from other republics.

This fragmentation has naturally triggered backlash in some republics. Rising regional assertion within the republics has reinforced pressures for reaffirmation or consolidation of authority in the republic center. To be sure, all these problems long predate the coup. But the sudden imperial dissolution that followed defeat of the coup unleashed additional forces at all levels, some in reaction to each other's unleashing, that have greatly accelerated earlier trends.

Regional fragmentation has, at the republic level and below, taken still another form: vigorous efforts to advance a nation-building agenda that seeks to identify republic independence with symbols of ethnic unity and hegemony. Thus, in many republics, the Soviet flag has been replaced on public buildings by traditional ethno-territorial flags. The replacement of Soviet-era names for republics, cities, towns, streets, and buildings with traditional names has accelerated. Throughout the country, statues of Lenin and other Old Bolsheviks have come tumbling down or been defaced, presumably to be replaced by those of traditional heroes.

At the republic level, efforts to reinforce imperial dissolution with the consolidation of republic state sovereignty have also entailed accelerated efforts to gain international recognition of that sovereignty, to expand further the role of republic foreign ministries, and to expand direct economic ties with neighboring states or great powers. In some cases, these pursuits have included mini-summit meetings with foreign heads of state.[12]

One long-standing source of conflict between nation-building and citizenship has come to a head as a result of newfound opportunities for juridical independence: the relative citizenship status of different ethnic groups within republics. In Latvia, for example, where the Latvians are a bare majority in the republic, independence has forced a resolution of the conflict over whether members of the republic's ethnic minorities should have the same citizenship status and voting rights as Latvians. An analogous conflict has come to a head in Estonia.

Within other republics, frightened ethnic minorities seek reassurance or outside protection. Throughout the country, some new political parties and ideologies are bound to form around these lines of cleavage. In Kirgizia, for example, a nationalist Kirgiz party is chiefly opposed by a party that is multi-ethnic in composition. It will be natural for additional parties to be based, at least initially, on disaffected minorities within republics. These tensions are not necessarily irreconcilable. Historically, under the right conditions, nation-building and citizenship have proven compatible. But the conditions obtaining in the post-coup Soviet Union have exacerbated the tension between group and individual rights, between the ethnic and the universalistic bases of political mobilization.

Among those conditions has been a tendency toward still another form of regional fragmentation: what Gregory Grossman has called accelerated "cellularization" of the economy.[13] This refers to a form of fragmentation in which pervasive shortages and high uncertainty over supply availability from other regions lead to efforts to insulate the unit (be it functional or, in this case, geographical) from that uncertainty through

[11]Yel'tsin and his allies have fired many local officials within the Russian republic, dissolved local governments that supported the coup, sent plenipotentiaries to many localities to enforce their will, and prepared a draft constitution that provides for a strong presidency.

[12]For a review of efforts by republics to expand foreign ties during 1989–91, see Joseph Brandt and Phillip Goldman, "The Internationalization of the Soviet Union," typescript, Berkeley, CA, 1991.

[13]Personal communication.

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strivings for self-sufficiency, refusal to export goods from the region, customs barriers, restriction of retail sales only to residents of the region, development of ad hoc arrangements with distant suppliers for materials unavailable locally, and so on. We have witnessed this tendency for several years now, as the command economy has broken down. But the disestablishment, restructuring, and purge of central institutions since the coup, along with the dissolution of central power and the accelerating economic decline (and the approach of winter) have increased the tendency.[14]

To the extent that regional-economic cellularization is a response to shortages and supply uncertainties, it is a short-term phenomenon that is both "rational" and reversible. But to the extent that cellularization coincides geographically with ethno-territorial boundaries, it fuses economic and ethnic regionalism (or "nationalism") in ways likely to reinforce both.

De-Fusion of Political Power

Still another trend reinforced by defeat of the coup has been the structural and, more important, functional differentiation of Soviet public administration. Mark Field once aptly characterized the Soviet political order as one suffering from "constricted development"—the party (backed by the KGB) penetrates all significant political space and supervises all governmental functions, thus depressing both economic efficiency and political legitimacy.[15] By contrast, as Parsonian social theorists have described at great length, the development of liberal democracy in the West was accompanied by or resulted in processes of structural and functional differentiation among the main governmental institutions, the partial depoliticization of public administration, checks and balances among arenas of power, and the subordination of military and police to civilian authority.

One could hardly expect these processes to take place in the Soviet Union in a very short period of time, but the aftermath of the coup has certainly advanced the cause of "defusing" the functions of central institutions. Soviet commentators refer to this tendency as "depoliticization" or "departyization." Among the indicators have been decrees demanding dissolution of party cells and organs in the workplace, educational institutions, the media, the military, the KGB, the procuracy, the courts, and the ministries; suspension or abolition of the CPSU and of some republic communist parties, as well as dissolution of the all-Union Communist Youth League; prohibition of "organized political activity" within the armed forces, KGB, and MVD; withdrawal from the all-Union KGB of many functions and forces hitherto used for fighting "political crime" and penetrating governmental institutions; prohibition of state officials from holding official positions in any political party; and confiscation of party-owned media outlets, including news services, newspapers, electronic media, and publishing houses.

Many of these changes have been decreed at the central level and have been echoed in decrees at republic levels. It is too soon to tell to what extent they have been implemented, subverted, reversed, or ignored. But there is sufficient evidence to assert that real organizational changes have resulted, and that monopolization of political power by the party and the KGB has been decisively undercut.

Paradoxically, but not surprisingly, the coup has reinforced those who argue that the only way to prevent another coup is first to disestablish certain institutions (perhaps by extra-constitutional means) and then to strengthen respect for constitutional proceduralism as a hedge against further coups d'état.[16] It will be fascinating to see whether this de-fusion of Soviet public administration ultimately results in a more or less neutral civil service, or alternatively results in domination of public administration by a different partisan organization. The rhetoric of "depoliticization" that is used to justify the changes, and the contents of some decrees, may reinforce the principle of functional differentiation and non-partisanship. But this norm is as yet weakly institutionalized. In any case, patterns are likely to vary across regions.

A related, but analytically distinct, process of demonopolization accelerated by defeat of the coup has been the "demilitarization" of state, economy, and society. The familiar quip that the Soviet Union does not have a military-industrial complex because the Soviet Union *is* a military-industrial complex well expresses

[14]For a description of cellularization in Sverdlovsk, see Felicity Barringer, "Soviet Barter: The Haves and Have-Nots," *The New York Times*, Sept. 19, 1991. At the republic level, cellularization is sometimes exacerbated by blockades (as in the Caucasus), by parliamentary decisions to limit exports of commodities (as in Ukraine and Uzbekistan, among others), and by decisions to employ coupon systems that limit the right of purchase to republic residents.

[15]Mark G. Field, "Soviet Society and Communist Party Controls: A Case of 'Constricted' Development," in Donald W. Treadgold, Ed., *Soviet and Chinese Communism: Similarities and Differences*, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1967, pp. 185–211.

[16]This is an instance in the familiar pattern of norm-formation in post-Stalin political history. See Grey Hodnett, "The Pattern of Leadership Politics," in Seweryn Bialer, Ed., *The Domestic Context of Soviet Foreign Policy*, Boulder, CO, Westview, 1981, pp. 87–118; more generally, but relevant to current Soviet developments, see Robert Axelrod, "An Evolutionary Approach to Norms," *American Political Science Review* (Washington, DC), December 1986, pp. 1095–1112.

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the fusion of party and military values and interests in the Brezhnev era. By purging the central military command, preparing for wider purges within the military, accepting the principle of moving toward a smaller, less expensive professional army, accelerating military reforms, abolishing or restructuring the Main Political Administration, provisionally accepting republic rights to establish, if they insist, their own armed forces and defense ministries, dissolving the USSR Committee on Defense and Security, and suspending the activities of DOSAAF ("Voluntary Society for Cooperation with the Army, Air Force, and Navy"), among other things, the new Soviet leadership and its allies in the armed forces have moved dramatically in the direction of demilitarization. What's more, defense minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov has proposed putting civilians in control of the USSR defense ministry, and of "Committees for Defense" in the republics.[17] Such "civilianization" of military control, which could soon be followed by laws requiring elected politicians to give up military commissions before serving in government, would constitute another important step toward differentiation of political and military roles, and toward military resubordination to civilian authority. The latter is an important follow-up. Abolition of party control of the military is only a historically "progressive" step if it is followed by non-partisan or constitutionalized subordination to civilian authority. As in all matters, however, the degree to which this takes place will likely vary greatly across the republics.

Mass Political Mobilization

Defeat of the coup has unleashed a variety of social forces, with disparate aims, that are prepared to use mass political protest, or paramilitary formations, as a hammer against their opponents. Advocates of independence in the autonomous republics and oblasts of the Russian republic, as well as in almost all the union republics of the USSR, have taken to the streets by the tens of thousands (the numbers vary greatly across regions) to demand either ethno-territorial independence, dissolution of the local Communist party, final destruction of the symbols of the old regime, the break-up of local power structures, or a combination of the above. Many local governments find themselves under siege. Others join with the demonstrators in pursuit of common goals. In a number of areas, paramilitary mobilization has increased sharply. Some places, such as Checheno-Ingushetia, reached a condition of violent anarchy in October 1991. In other places, there is less disorder but more formal political mobilization in anticipation of forthcoming elections and referenda.

Another form of mass political mobilization is taking place throughout the country and at all levels: efforts to determine blame for involvement or acquiescence in the coup attempt. To some extent, and in some places, this process must surely be turning into a "witch-hunt" against old personal or political enemies—a settling of scores. Throughout the country, the definition of complicity has proven to be quite elastic, with some people ostracized for reacting too slowly against the coup. The entire process, however, was initially impelled by an urge among radicals in Moscow and in the locales to root out the "old guard," seize the organs of power wherever possible, and, not incidentally, prevent another coup.

To some extent we can only speculate about the impact of the coup's aftermath on public political consciousness. Opinion polls taken hastily in recent weeks reveal some shifts in attitude, such as a sharp rise in Gorbachev's popularity, and the still higher levels of popularity of Yel'tsin.[18] Beyond these volatile attitudes, however, we may have to wait for indicators of still deeper shifts. The revolutionary moment through which the country has lived is not likely to have altered popular appreciation of specific tradeoffs involved in marketization and democratization. But it probably has demoralized the forces of conservatism and emboldened the urban forces of radicalism.

Most obviously and dramatically, events since the coup have allowed for the final repudiation and demystification of the remaining symbols of communist ideology and its historical mythology. As suggested above, the swift ratification of Leningrad's name change (to Sankt Peterburg), the other name changes of various sorts throughout the country, the toppling and defacement of statues of Old Bolshevik leaders—these and analogous actions were the coup de grace for the old regime's mythology. Public consciousness perhaps had already erased any positive association with the old regime's ideology, but repudiation of the historical mythology of Bolshevism was less widespread. While many members of the population may have retained belief in Lenin and "Great October" after the coup, it is clear that defeat of the coup allowed social forces eager to repudiate the historical mythology to seize the initiative.

We do not know how this televised destruction of icons influenced the public's evaluation of history. But it

[17]For Shaposhnikov's plans, see his interview published in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* (Moscow), Sept. 20, 1991, as summarized in *RFE/RL Daily Report* (Munich), No. 181, Sept. 23, 1991.

[18]See *The Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 17, 1991.

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must certainly have altered public consciousness of the ability of social forces to assail the Old Guard, and its historical symbolism, with impunity. This sudden sense of empowerment is certainly one characteristic of a revolutionary situation, and is reason to define August 1991 as the equivalent for the USSR of Eastern Europe's revolutions of 1989. Yet, as the events in Eastern Europe during 1990 and 1991 have shown, revolutionary euphoria may quickly give way to disillusion when economic conditions do not improve. The change in the correlation of political forces in the USSR has created a window for new policy. It has perhaps not created a fundamental shift in political consciousness. And the window is not likely to remain open for long.

Politics as a Multi-Level Game

Another consequence of all these changes has been the transformation of central Soviet politics into a multi-level game.[19] That transformation has in turn contributed to a degree of political paralysis such that, two months after the coup that ostensibly brought the radicals to power, little progress has been made toward specifying the terms of future political, economic, and security cooperation among the former republics.

This game now has three levels: the international system, Moscow, and the republics. It has three sets of actors, all of whom are continuously involved in bargaining over the future scope of cooperation: the rich democracies that have been urged to help finance the Soviet transition; representatives of each republic and the "center" in the various councils in Moscow charged with negotiating the economic- and political-union treaties; and the parliaments of each republic, which must ratify the treaties. Finding common ground among these three levels is proving to be a daunting task. The partial political paralysis caused by this complicated game has contributed to the disintegrative tendencies outlined above.

Centripetal Forces

It is important not to exaggerate the scope of all these changes, or to lose sight of factors and forces capable of mitigating (if not entirely offsetting) centrifugal tendencies. "Chaos" or "anarchy" are legitimate fears, and these terms are politically useful to invoke in order to mobilize supporters at home and abroad; they are, however, exaggerated characterizations of conditions in most of the country. Political mobilization, for example, is selective, both geographically and in terms of the numbers involved. Most people in most places are involved primarily in private pursuits—the daily struggle for existence.

Processes of imperial dissolution and regional fragmentation are to some extent offset by economic reality. Stalinist industrial location policy ensured that the republics would be heavily dependent on each other for crucial supplies, while central planning left behind a far-flung economy in need of some degree of central coordination of transportation, energy, and banking policy. The Soviet command economy produced goods of such low quality that they could not easily be sold in Western markets. In many cases, this left the republics' markets as the only alternative. In Central Asia, the republics are dependent on the center for economic subsidies totaling 50 percent of their budgets, while many other republics would suffer greatly at the loss of their more modest subsidies. Hence, for a variety of mutually reinforcing reasons, fully breaking away from the "Union," however it be defined, is economically difficult, if not perilous.

What is more, Soviet settlement policy ensured that few republics would even approach ethnic homogeneity; thus, large ethnic communities identifying with the "Union" (or with an outside protector) exist within most republics. This reality, coupled with intense disputes between republics, reinforces the ability of the center (be it all-Union or Russian) to play the role of mediator, enforcer, or protector. And while many republic leaders speak of wanting the trappings of total sovereignty, such as their own armed forces, it is by no means clear that they will be able to afford the expense involved. To this we can add the realities of nuclear weapons control, which create very strong pressures for centralization of command, and the realities of Russian economic and military power, which could allow that republic subtlely to enforce its will on many issues, even when the bargaining on these issues takes place among independent states.[20]

Nor is the international environment simply a centrifugal force. While Western powers pushed for Baltic independence, they have not recognized the independence of other republics and are insisting that economic assistance be funneled through a "center" that is sufficiently coherent to coordinate the all-Union economy. The norm of territorial integrity is a powerful one in the international community,[21] and complicates

[19]On multi-level games, see Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization* (Cambridge, MA), Summer 1988, pp. 427–60; and Ernst B. Haas, *When Knowledge Is Power*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1990.

[20]On the potential for de facto Russian hegemony, see Brandt and Goldman, loc. cit.

[21]See Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg, "Why Africa's Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood," *World Politics* (Princeton, NJ), October 1982, pp. 1–24.

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efforts by truly secessionist republic leaders (such as those in Georgia, Armenia, and Moldova) to build foreign support for their aspirations.

While processes of political disestablishment and de-monopolization appear to have gone quite far in recent weeks (especially outside Central Asia), it is also the case that local power structures are seldom easily or quickly dismantled. Despite purges of some institutions and disestablishment of others, we may assume that many a power relationship in the economic, administrative, and political realms in cities and towns across Russia and Ukraine remains much the way it was before, albeit with different labels. In many areas, even outside Central Asia, we may assume that regional fragmentation has reinforced not democratization but consolidation or monopolization of power by existing strongmen or new apparatuses. Much has changed; but much has not. The degree to which this generalization holds true in different locales, of course, is a matter for research.

Centripetal Efforts

Centripetal forces have also been accompanied by vigorous, almost frenzied, centripetal *efforts* on the part of certain leaders in both the center and the republics to prevent things from spinning out of control. Representatives of both the all-Union and Russian republic governments have initiated discussions, or signed agreements, with the new Baltic states regarding military bases, KGB activities, withdrawal of interior ministry (OMON) troops, and the like, while simultaneously negotiating with them the terms of continuing economic association. Similar discussions have taken place between authorities from the Russian republic and those from Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and other republics. Then, too, defense minister Shaposhnikov and his associates have been involved in intensive discussions with leaders of various republics about the kind of defense sector that might be salvaged from the wreckage of the Soviet empire.

The new state structure established by the USSR Congress of People's Deputies provided for a provisional State Council within which leaders of the republics, along with Gorbachev, would decide fundamental matters of policy affecting their collective fate. These negotiations have focused initially on creating an economic common market to unite as many republics as possible, based on the pursuit or defense of common economic interests. The negotiations have been complex and fractious; the extent of economic authority being ceded to Moscow and the interrelationship between economic and political "Union" or "community" are the issues that lie at the heart of the disputes. On October 18, it was announced that only eight of the original 15 republics had agreed to sign the economic treaty, clouding the future of even that minimal level of agreement.[22]

At a more technical-organizational level, interrepublic committees have been established in Moscow to coordinate (not dictate) matters of common concern regarding culture, education, and electronic broadcasting. Similarly, a secretariat has been established within the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to coordinate all-Union and republic foreign policies, the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs has formally integrated representation of republic foreign ministries into its structures, and debate continues over the division of labor to be forged between the all-Union and republic foreign ministries.[23]

On a different plane, centripetal efforts have centered on restraining witch-hunts and retribution that might tear society apart. Many central and republic leaders have apparently agreed not to publish those portions of KGB and party archives that might reveal long lists of living informers. Other central and republic leaders have sought to prevent disestablishment of the CPSU from resulting in general persecution of all individuals who still hold party cards—i.e., the general membership, as opposed to the apparatus. Indeed, Aleksandr Rutskoy, Yel'tsin's vice president, is seeking to recruit millions of former party members into a new leftist party as a means of providing a sense of political efficacy for former "party citizens" who want change but not the revolutionary kind.[24] Further hopeful signs include the new Ukrainian citizenship law, which attempts to defuse tensions between nation-building and citizenship within that republic by providing dual citizenship for non-Ukrainian residents "on the basis of bilateral agreements with other states."

Centripetal efforts have also extended to a redefinition of Soviet leaders' appeals to the rich countries of the world. The need for foreign assistance is now unabashedly characterized as emergency humanitarian aid. Pride no longer interferes with begging for a handout to cushion the social impact of both the approaching winter and impending changes in economic policy. At the International Monetary Fund meetings in Bang-

[22]Ukrainian authorities refused to sign, but indicated the possibility of acquiescence at a later date. See *The New York Times*, Oct. 19, 1991.

[23]See Jan S. Adams, "New Structures at the USSR Foreign Ministry," *Report on the USSR*, Oct. 4, 1991, pp. 10–13.

[24]The term "party citizens" was first used by Moshe Lewin. See *Political Undercurrents in Soviet Economic Debates*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1974, p. 278, where he refers to "the ordinary citizen party member."

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President of Azerbaijan Ayaz Mutabilov, President of the Russian republic Boris Yel'tsin, President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbaev, and Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Armenia Lev Ter-Petrosian at their press conference in Zheleznovodsk on September 25, 1991, after their talks on settling the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh.

—D. Sokolov/TASS from Sovfoto.

kok this October, Soviet officials clearly mobilized Western pressures on republic leaders to maintain a viable "center" and to sign an economic treaty as soon as possible. Equally important, several Soviet leaders have appealed to Europe to imagine ways in which the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process could be extended to encompass interrepublic relations within the former USSR. Foreign minister Boris Pankin even implied that European monitors might be placed in the country to supervise ceasefires.[25] President Gorbachev warned delegates to the CSCE conference in Moscow that persecution of Russian and other minorities within republics or independent states of the former USSR would be an international issue, and that Europe would have an enormous stake in its outcome.[26]

There may be differences within the leadership over the best way—internal or external mediation—to approach these issues. Conceivably, Yel'tsin's teaming with Kazakh leader Nazarbaev to mediate an end to the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute stemmed, in part, from a desire to demonstrate that Russian-Kazakh benevolent intervention can manage inter-communal and inter-republic problems without foreign interference. The same may be true of the motivation behind sending a Russian republic parliamentary delegation to Moldova to investigate the regional fragmentation within that country. (It ended up condemning the Russian separatists within Moldova.) Other leading officials of the Russian republic have attempted to mediate paralyzing conflicts in Checheno-Ingushetia, Tajikistan, and elsewhere.

These varied centripetal efforts, in league with the more "objective" centripetal forces at work, may yet fail to prevent chaos or uncontrolled disintegration. The example of Yugoslavia is not encouraging to those who hope for peaceful solutions (or amicable divorces), though the example of Yugoslavia itself could also affect calculations of leaders currently negotiating over the future of the Union. This is not the place to analyze more fully the economic, military, social, and political forces at home and abroad pushing events in one direction or the other. But these efforts are as much a feature of the current political landscape as are the disintegrating tendencies they are trying to contain.

Unfinished Business

As I mentioned at the outset, the coup accelerated trends and tendencies that were well in train before August 1991. The revolutionary moment through which the country lived broke many a bottleneck and dam; indeed, it ensured realization of precisely the near-term outcomes that the coup-plotters were trying to prevent.

[25] *RFE/RL Daily Report*, No. 169, Sept. 5, 1991.
[26] Ibid., No. 173, Sept. 11, 1991.

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Moreover, the unfinished business of political and economic transformation remains before the country, and the contradictions of transition remain manifold; none of them have been resolved by the changes since late August. The business of managing the political fallout from simultaneous processes of imperial dissolution, fiscal stabilization, and economic marketization will be the greatest challenge facing Russian and "Union" leaders in the years to come.

Some of the changes since the coup will complicate that task. Regional fragmentation, for example, can buttress the ability of local tyrants to fend off central interference and imposed *perestroyka* (as seems to be the hope of certain leaders in Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan). To the extent that the redefined "Union" is comprised of states ranging from unstable, incipient democracies to fascist or Islamic fundamentalist regimes, the prospects for sustained coordination of policy are diminished.[27] Similarly, a "messy" imperial dissolution could lead Russian leaders to protect persecuted Russian minorities in states along Russia's borders, or to face the migration back to Russia of millions of angry Russian settlers.[28] Either of these scenarios would in turn diminish the prospects for a liberal, as opposed to xenophobic, variant of Russian nationalism taking hold in the Russian republic, and providing the ideological glue for democratic development in that state.

Similar unfinished business obtains in the economic realm, with some recent changes further complicating the task. Regional fragmentation and cellularization exacerbate an already dire economic situation at a time when coordinated policies regarding fiscal stabilization and preparation for the winter are urgently needed. Given the interdependencies in the existing all-Union economy, an effective stabilization plan requires restoration of coordinative ties among regions and economic units. Yet, political pressures for separation on the local level could severely compromise the country's ability to meet these common challenges.

On the other hand, some changes since the coup facilitate the task of radical economic transformation. The individuals and institutions opposed to de-monopolization of economic power can no longer as easily block the changes. Moreover, it will now be easier to foster marketization to the extent that willing republic elites (not all are willing) have the authority to break through ground-level bottlenecks and obstacles. Strong, legitimate states are better vehicles for marketization (and for attracting foreign investment) than is a weak, illegitimate, all-Union government that retains the power to block creative initiatives. In these respects, events of August 1991 hold promise for creating promising political preconditions for economic reform. Stated differently, not all fragmentation undermines the transition process. Indeed, some forms of disintegration may be preconditions for economic marketization and political democratization.

Simultaneously, there is much work yet to be done in other areas: nation-building within the fragments of the empire, elite formation,[29] institution-building, state-building. And this must all be tackled while coping with the economic emergency, transforming economic institutions, and defining or managing fundamentally new relationships between the former republics and their international environments. Will passions throughout the former empire outpace the sober calculations and political skills required to meet these challenges, or will cooperative solutions be found? Will new ideologies and identities take hold encouraging exclusion and retribution, or fostering inclusion and reconciliation?

It may be several years before we can judge whether events since August 1991 have actually improved the prospects for market democracy. But when we look back, we will have to be careful to specify what we mean by "success" and "failure," and how the degrees of each are reflected across the predictably varied landscape of what used to be called the Soviet Union.

[27]The growing integration of Western Europe, we should remember, was made possible by political, ideological, and cultural similarities among the states, along with steadily increasing prosperity and a unifying military threat. None of these conditions is likely to obtain in the former Soviet Union.

[28]For such a messy scenario, see Edward Keenan, "Rethinking the USSR, Now That It's Over," *The New York Times*, Sept. 8, 1991.

[29]See Kenneth Jowitt's contribution to "A Survey of Opinion on the East European Revolution," loc. cit., p. 194; he calls it "elite-building."

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Alternative Perspectives on the August Coup

William E. Odom

WE are too close to the events of the abortive August coup in Moscow to judge its meaning with confidence. It could prove as momentous for Russian history as the February Revolution in Petrograd in 1917. Or it could become a footnote like General Lavr Kornilov's abortive coup that same August. These two fundamentally different, yet plausible, analogies indicate the difficulty of making sense of the coup so soon after its occurrence.

Like February 1917, the coup seems to mark the end of an imperial regime and signal a new opportunity for liberal democracy to develop. Like Kornilov's fiasco in August 1917, the coup seems to have awakened everyone to the degree of decay in the old regime's political and military instruments of power; it therefore may be a marker on the road to something like the Bolshevik coup in October 1917. And, finally, like the atmosphere created by the counter-coup forces rallying around Alexander Kerensky—forces so politically incompatible that their alliance lasted only a few weeks—there is an eerie mood in Moscow as Boris Yel'tsin defends Mikhail Gorbachev, as Colonel Viktor Alksnis (one of the USSR Supreme Soviet's "black colonels") stands apart from the coup, and as Gorbachev's rhetoric increasingly resembles the hollowness of Kerensky's in autumn 1917. How long can these disparate forces cooperate?

Of the many possibilities, let us consider briefly four alternative, yet compatible, analytic approaches for examining the recent coup. First, we can look at it up close in its immediate context, asking why it failed and whether it could have succeeded. Second, we can put it in the context of *perestroyka* over the past six years. Third, we can view it in historical perspective, comparing it to the Russian Revolution or even to the Time of Troubles at the turn of the 17th century. Finally, we can analyze it in an attempt to determine what it means for the future.

The Context of the Immediate

If indeed the failure of the coup proves as much a historical turning point as the February Revolution in 1917, the immediate context will eventually receive extraordinary scrutiny. Some will argue that the coup never really had a chance. The public, including ordinary soldiers and policemen, simply would not stand for it. Others will wonder about the circumstances surrounding the coup. If the coup-makers had not been drunk, would they have succeeded? If they had arrested Yel'tsin, who escaped by 40 minutes by one account, what would have happened? Or suppose Gorbachev had joined them? If the signing of the Union treaty had been postponed, as the Ukrainians demanded, would there have been a coup? Still others will point to the daring action and luck of Yel'tsin, Anatoliy Sobchak, and others as the determining factors. Had Sobchak not made it back to Leningrad, or had Yel'tsin dallied before going to the RSFSR parliament building, or had some other small event slowed or upset the rapid action of the leaders of the opposition, would not the passivity of most of officialdom have allowed the coup to succeed?

Those who follow E. H. Carr's philosophy of history will dismiss such reflection on the "might have beens" as mere parlor games.[1] Others, and I count myself among them, will find such analysis instructive about

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[1] E. H. Carr, *What is History?* New York, Alfred Knopf, 1962, pp. 126–27.

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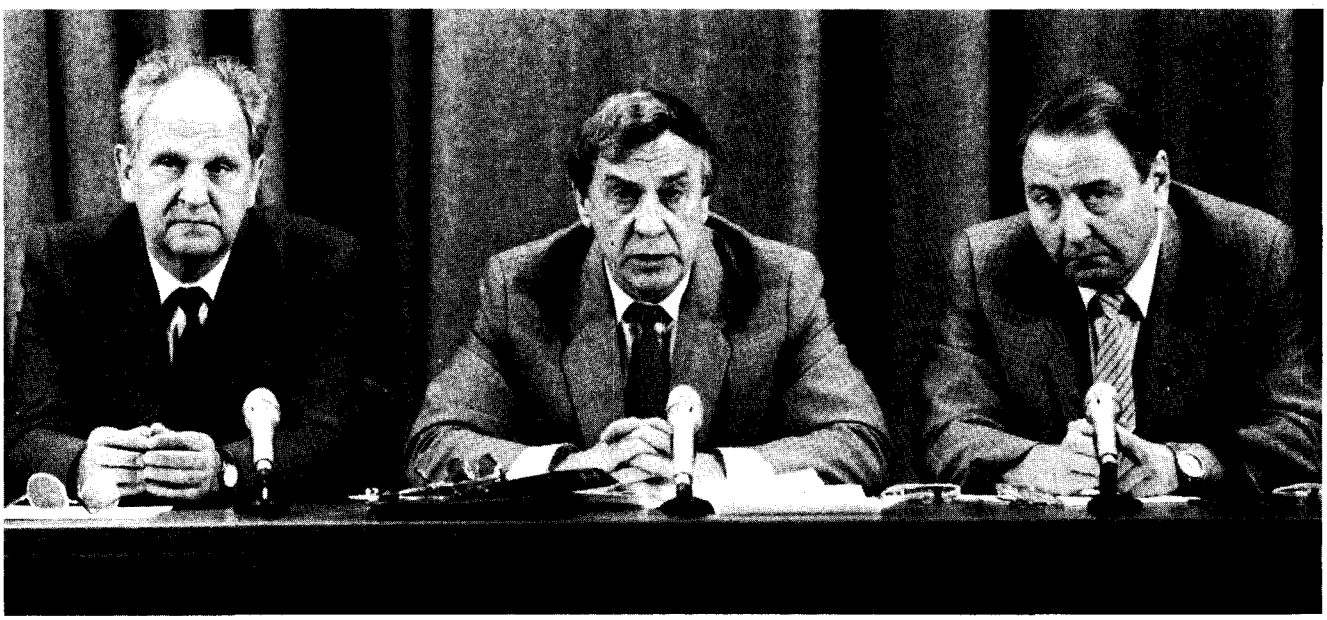

The August 19, 1991, press conference of the State Emergency Committee. From left to right, Boris Pugo, minister of internal affairs; Gennadiy Yanayev, vice president of the USSR; and Oleg Baklanov, first deputy chairman of the Defense Council.

—D. Babushkin/TASS from Sovfoto.

the structure of events and forces, as well as helpful for anticipating how or whether things can be reversed in the future (although the odds of a dramatic reversal, admittedly, look remarkably low). There is something instructive about the context of the immediate which should not be overlooked. The crowds in the streets did not include more than a small minority of the population of Moscow. Passivity was everywhere evident. Had the coup-makers not called in the army, and had they managed to survive a week or two, is it not likely that they would have survived for several months or a year to two? As Yel'tsin's people examine the party and KGB documents found after the coup, they are discovering that camps in the GULag were ready to receive prisoners, tribunals for summary trials were organized, and extensive lists of persons to be arrested had been compiled.[2] The disorder among the leaders of the coup was not entirely mirrored at some of the lower levels of the Soviet bureaucracy.

The "might have beens" in the immediate context seem to tell us that the larger political struggle is far from resolved. Liberal reform may be on the agenda with new momentum as a result of the coup, but other things will also be forced onto the agenda. Gorbachev has not given up salvaging something from the Soviet Union, and the leaders of the republics show little willingness to allow him anything but enough power to try to preside over its peaceful dissolution.

A parallel struggle has begun in the West among scholars, pundits, and political leaders. Some insist on believing that the Soviet Union can survive as a new liberal state. Others insist that national self-determination is the stronger force and that it offers a better prospect for liberalism. They argue that there are, after all, no examples of "liberal empires" and that wishing for or supporting the maintenance of the Soviet state is not compatible with support for liberal reform.

With only a few weeks' distance from the events of August 1991, I am inclined to the view that the outcome of the coup was a close call. If the coup-makers had held on for ten days or two weeks, they would probably have managed to hold power for a year or two. However, because they failed, and because Yel'tsin has been so aggressive in dismantling the institutions of central control, decay and breakdown of the Soviet political system have been accelerated. At the same time, the uncertainties that the dissolution of the Union is creating and the ambivalent attitudes toward private property and market economics in the population at large may give the coup quite another significance. It may soon be seen as the end of a period of failed reform and the beginning of a revolutionary struggle for control over the successor states and what kinds of new institutions will be built.

[2]The author received this information from visiting Soviet citizens in the United States.

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The *Perestroyka* Context

If we interpret the failed coup within the dynamics of *perestroyka*, we will not see it as a surprising or chance event. It has been in the cards all along. In the pages of this journal in 1987, asking "How Far Can Soviet Reform Go?," I admitted that I could not determine either from his rhetoric or his actions what Gorbachev intended. I was forced to conclude that he was creating a paradox: ". . . great central power is required to achieve a major decentralization of economic control and power. If Gorbachev succeeds, he will lose his centralized power to forces that could undercut the political authority of the regime to a degree that could lead to the breakup of the empire."[3]

Upon his return to Moscow after the coup had failed, Gorbachev revealed how oblivious he was to this paradox. He talked as if he could continue his reform programs within the context of the Soviet Union, that is, without recognizing that the republics had already virtually destroyed the Soviet Union. The peoples of the Soviet Union are probably lucky that Gorbachev apparently never perceived the paradox he was creating. Otherwise he might have abandoned *perestroyka* several years ago. He has turned out to be a skilled but inadvertent revolutionary and a wholly incompetent but dedicated reformer.

Gorbachev's skill in keeping the conservatives off balance and undercutting their bases of power was truly remarkable. His conservative critics were far more insightful about the true dynamics of *perestroyka*. They understood that it would end Soviet power. He apparently did not. Yegor Ligachev recognized the deep significance of relegating "international class struggle" to a much lower priority than "humankind interests" and of establishing a truly cooperative relationship with the "imperialist" powers. So did the military leaders, who knew that the international class struggle provided an endless justification for amassing ever greater military power. Marshal Sergey Akhromeyev understood that letting the Soviet military lose its icon status in society and become the object of public scorn would lead to the collapse of the Soviet state. The abortive coup, in this perspective, was a desperate attempt to ward off the fate of the Soviet Union that the conservatives so accurately anticipated. Their action, however, by coming so late, only hastened it rather than prevented it.

One is forced to wonder why a coup was not attempted much earlier. Signs of a swing back to a conservative policy began to accumulate with the military intervention in Baku in January 1990. Gorbachev showed a new deference to the military throughout the spring, and by fall, he had turned over military reform almost wholly to Marshal Dmitriy Yazov. The leadership crisis in November marked yet another conservative shift, and by January 1991, we saw an effort to bring the Baltic republics under control by military force. Rumors of a coup started in September 1990, and they reemerged with remarkable frequency in the late spring and early summer of 1991. The "Word to the People," a manifesto appearing in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* on July 23, 1991, was a call for a movement to reverse *perestroyka* signed by two deputy ministers and numerous other influential figures. All the signals anyone needed were there to suggest that a coup was being organized. However, both Gorbachev and Western analysts fell victim to the ambiguous warning created by the repeated off and on signals. The little shepherd boy cried wolf too often. The very logic of *perestroyka*, however, was the creation of "wolves" of reaction that would try to prey on the "sheep" of reform.

For understanding the dynamics of *perestroyka*, Samuel Huntington's distinction between "political decay" and "political development" is highly instructive. Huntington says that "The most important political distinction among countries concerns not their form of government but their degree of government."[4] Political development, i.e., increasing the degree of government, is not the same thing as political decay, the weakening of governmental institutions.

Perestroyka has not facilitated political development, that is, reform, as much as it has accelerated political decay. *Perestroyka* literally means "reconstruction," something that strongly suggests political development, but, as the coup has revealed, "*rasstroyka*," or "disorder," a term that suggests political decay, would, perhaps, have been more appropriate. For most of the past six years, there has been paralysis in reform efforts, retarding serious progress in the development of a new political and economic system. If the coup indeed brings a rapid destruction of the already decadent old Soviet institutions, then political development will be possible but by no means assured.

Why has so much of Western analysis taken at face value the literal meaning of "*perestroyka*" when the evidence against doing so has been overwhelming? As noted above, how can one liberalize an empire? Even multinational liberal states tend more often than not to

[3]William E. Odom, "How Far Can Soviet Reform Go?" *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), November-December 1987, p. 28.

[4]Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1968, p. 1.

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show signs of instability. Consider Canada's Québecois, or the Walloons in Belgium, or the Scots and the Irish in the United Kingdom. What are the prospects for a state with 15 national republics and many smaller ethnically defined territories?

Westerners find elections and parliaments seductive; they see free elections to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet as both incredible and attractive. Witnessing the formation of several opposition political parties and movements added to the excitement. These institutions are highly symbolic and suggestive for us. They mean pluralism and liberal democracy in the Western context. They reflect a diffusion of power that checks central authority and holds it responsible to legal standards.

Although power did diffuse rapidly in the fourth and fifth years of *perestroyka,* very little of it went to the Supreme Soviet and the political parties represented there. Rather, power was drifting inexorably to the republics while political decay in the party, the military, and the central economic organs was rapidly advancing. Incipient political development was strongest in the Baltic republics, followed by Georgia, Armenia, and Moldova, but in most of the republics, decay was moving faster than political development.

By focusing on the marginal—although highly important—developments in the Supreme Soviet, in the new political parties, and among the articulate Moscow intelligentsia, the media and the pundits thought they saw political development—or *perestroyka*—when in fact what they saw were symptoms of political decay and disorder—or *rasstroyka*.

When viewed in the context of *perestroyka,* the coup shows that we were missing the main trends of change in the Soviet Union. We were interpreting the symptoms of political decay as reform and ignoring the large diffusion of power to the republics. The leaders of the republics are now unlikely to let us continue our misplaced focus. They have held center stage for some time, and the Western spotlights have shifted to them.

Finally, the coup seems to confirm the view that totalitarian systems do not evolve into pluralist or constitutional systems as do some other forms of authoritarian systems. Initiative for change comes from the top, but it does not bring reform. As Alexander Motyl has pointed out, reform efforts in totalitarian systems merely create new political space into which competitive forces move.[5] Reform fails, and unless power is adequately recentralized, collapse follows. We have seen this pattern repeated several times before—Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and throughout Eastern Europe in 1989. In 1956 and 1968, power was recentralized by Soviet intervention. Wojciech Jaruzelski was unable to recentralize it adequately in Poland. After Khrushchev's reform efforts, Brezhnev was able to recentralize in some ways, not in others. He was particularly unsuccessful in enforcing party discipline, and he gave up all efforts at periodic turnover of party cadres to defeat localism and corruption. During six years of *perestroyka,* so much political space was opened up to opposition forces that a reversal would have required drastic repressive actions, actions the State Emergency Committee either could not or would not take.

[5]Alexander Motyl, *Sovietology, Rationality, Nationality,* New York, Columbia University Press, 1990, p. 69.

The Historical Context

Viewing the coup and its aftermath in light of history promises to be highly fruitful. Although we will have to wait for the important studies based on this perspective that are sure to come, it is possible to be suggestive in a few paragraphs about what this perspective may yield.

If the coup does turn out to mark the end of the Soviet Union and the emergence of a group of successor national states, then the fate of the Russian empire and its Soviet imperial offspring will look very European. After the French Revolution, nationalism rent asunder the old imperial structures of Europe. This did not happen at once, but began in the west and moved eastward throughout the 19th and 20th centuries until the end of World War I, when the East European successor states to the empires were formed. The emergence of national states has not, to be sure, been followed inexorably by the creation of liberal democratic regimes. Europe has seen some very nasty forms of nationalism. It does seem, however, that national self-determination precedes liberal political development. It may not ensure it, but it appears to be a necessary precondition in most cases.

Historians may conclude that the end of Russian imperialism was always in the cards. Only the timing was uncertain. And they may look back at 1917–21 and conclude that the Bolsheviks' seizure of power extended the empire's life for three quarters of a century. The Great Reforms of the 1860's had gone very far in bringing systemic change to Russia by 1914. Yet, in many regards, the Soviet Union, by the mid-1930's and afterwards, had more in common with the pre-1861 Russian empire than it did with modern industrial states of the West. In the longer historical view, the recent abortive coup may mark the end of this historical throwback that began in Russia just as it had disposed of the tsar and taken the road to democratic reform.

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If the coup is not followed by successful liberal political development in at least a few of the successor republics, including the Russian republic, and if civil war breaks out, leading to a new authoritarianism in residual parts of the Soviet Union, then historians may find the "Time of Troubles," following the break in the Russian dynasty at the turn of the 17th century, a more instructive comparison. In this event, the Soviet empire will not look European at all in its historical development. The Slavophiles will have had the better of their argument with the Westernizers. Russia will be following its own special path and not a European one.

A somewhat narrower historical comparison strikes me as highly important at this time. The Russian liberals took charge in the Provisional Government after the February Revolution in 1917. They admired British liberalism, and they wanted to imitate it in Russia. Why did they fail? William Rosenberg's impressive history of the Russian liberals gives a textured answer, and from the many weaknesses they suffered and mistakes they made, the one that stands out is their reluctance to permit national self-determination in non-Russian regions.[6] Even after the Bolsheviks came to power, they opposed Ukrainian separatism in December 1917. When forced to choose, they proved more imperial than liberal.

The truly striking thing about a growing number of Russian liberals today is that they seem to understand that empire and liberalism do not mix. Those who joined Yel'tsin advised him to support Baltic independence, to destroy the central organs of power, and to appeal to Russian national sovereignty, eschewing all desire to retain a strong Soviet state. These people are proving more liberal than imperial. Sometimes, however, even they say things that raise questions about how deeply they are committed to independence for the other republics.

If contemporary Russian liberals, the lineal descendants of the Constitutional Democrats, do in fact reject empire entirely, it will be an encouraging sign for democracy in Russia. Strangely, this new willingness to reject empire among some Russian liberals has been overlooked in the West. Yet, it is the biggest news from the Soviet Union since Boris Yel'tsin became head of the Russian republic, ceremoniously walked out of the 28th Party Congress, quit the Communist party, and began to push for Russian sovereignty. It was not news that the Baltic republics wanted to secede from the Soviet Union. It was dramatic news that Russia wanted to secede. Why was it largely overlooked as a signal of a critical restructuring of Soviet politics? The diffusion of power through elections to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies and the establishment of new political parties in Moscow may have been the main action in 1988 and 1989, but by the summer of 1990, the standoff between Yel'tsin's Russia and the other republics versus Gorbachev's decaying Soviet Union was more important. "Saint Boris of Holy Russia" was facing off against "Comrade Gorbachev of the Marxist Soviet Union." This new political configuration really owed much to the changing views of some of the Russian liberals toward empire and national self-determination.

This new approach to Russian nationalism, of course, did not originate with the liberals. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn made it part of the program he proposed in his "Letter to the Soviet Leaders" in 1973. He called for letting the republics secede. How widely his view is shared in Russian conservative and populist circles is not clear. It certainly has not been one of their slogans, but if it can win support among their ranks, that too is a positive sign.

Viewing the failed coup in the longer historical perspective should provide many additional insights. It could prove enlightening to review all of those political movements and parties that Trotsky condemned to the "dustbin of history" as the Bolsheviks took charge of the Petrograd Soviet on the day of the October coup in 1917. How many of them will crawl back out of the dustbin? To what degree has the social structure of the Soviet Union changed so that some or all of them will no longer be relevant? Will the Mensheviks return as modern European Social Democrats? Will the Social Revolutionaries return as the "*kolkhozniki*" party? E. H. Carr was too quick to dismiss the "might have beens" of the Russian Revolution. Some of them still might "be" or "become."

Future Political Dynamics

All three of the foregoing perspectives have implications for assessing probable future developments in the Soviet politics. The context of the immediate for the coup raises questions about the present balance of political forces and the prospects for coalitions of groups that want to begin constructing successor systems or a successor system. The *perestroyka* context forces us to think about both political development and political decay in the decade ahead. The longer historical perspective offers clues about both continuities and basic changes in the future.

At previous periods of crisis in Soviet politics in the years since World War II—particularly during times

[6]William Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1974.

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of political succession—analysis of future dynamics has depended on two mutually compatible paradigms. First, the totalitarian model was the paradigm in question after Stalin's death. For many analysts, it retained utility as a reference for judging just how much change had occurred. Second, most analysts based much of their forecasting on what we understood about the dynamics of the Communist party.

Today, I would argue that for a time the totalitarian model still has some utility in understanding, not only what Yel'tsin in particular has tried to do, but also what many reformers are attempting. They are still struggling with the wreckage of totalitarian institutions. Yel'tsin struck hard at the party apparatus, the KGB, and the economic-planning apparatus. He has also begun some drastic steps in dismantling the Soviet military's position in the non-Russian republics. Yet, both the coup leaders' attempt to rescue some of the old system and Yel'tsin's swift actions against the key central institutions of the old system are evidence of the resilience of some parts of the totalitarian structure. Despite six years of *perestroyka*, several of the six features of the totalitarian system were left basically unchanged.[7] Two of them, ideology and control of the media, suffered almost complete destruction before the coup. The party was decaying, but the apparatus was still extant, even if greatly weakened. The military was rotting from the bottom up but was still strong enough at the top to wrestle away initiative on reform from the Supreme Soviet. The KGB was the least decayed, although its health clearly was not good. Perhaps most important, the command economic apparatus still existed and successfully blocked extensive privatization and the creation of a market system.

For the next year or so, both politics at the center and politics in the republics will be concerned with dismantling these residual institutions of the old system. Throughout 1988 and 1989, both the center and the republics struggled with defining "economic sovereignty" for the republics. Some of the republic officials viewed this not as a chance to create private property and markets within their republics but merely as transferring central planning to the government of the republics. To the extent that approach survives in the next year, there will be support for some of the old system's institutions.

Although Marxist-Leninist ideology has been discredited, residual aspects of it will remain troublesome for quite some time. The popular internalization of some of its values and ideas about social and economic organization have been noted in public-opinion polls. Everyone wants economic improvement, but not everyone has abandoned the idea that socialism offers the most equitable economic order. Nor is the enthusiasm for a market economy as widespread as the reformers desire. Nostalgia for the Brezhnev period is frequently reported by journalists and public-opinion samplings.

The point of these observations is that understanding the future of politics in the territories of the old Soviet Union still requires a grasp of the dynamics and institutions of the old system.

At the same time, we will need a set of analytical concepts which have heretofore not been applied very diligently to Soviet politics. The most promising set of such concepts, in my view, is to be found in the political science literature on "political development." Perhaps equally important as an antidote to wishful thinking will be the literature on theories of democracy.

I mention theories of democracy because there has been a tendency to believe in an inchoate "pluralism" in the Soviet Union that would lead, if not to democracy, then to what Robert Dahl has called "polyarchy." It strikes me as imperative that we clarify precisely what we mean when we talk about the prospects for pluralism, liberalism, or democracy either in the Soviet Union or in the successor-states there. If the coup tells us anything, it suggests that evolution toward democracy had not been occurring. What we are seeing is the collapse of the old system. It remains an open question whether liberal democracy can take root, and we must be clear about the essential preconditions for it and what structural and legal arrangements must exist to constitute it before answering the question of its prospects in the Soviet Union.

Political development theory, of course, is concerned with political change and transitions, not just to democracy but to other forms of government as well. Sometimes the result has been "praetorianism" and varieties of authoritarianism, including the totalitarian variant. Western students of political development, quite naturally, have put the emphasis on how democracies come to be. And they inevitably have had to come to grips with state-building. They have also asked a lot of questions about the relationship between politics and markets. These are the key questions we must answer about the future of Soviet politics.

No matter what set of tools we choose, we are not going to be able to predict the course of Soviet politics. Political leaders are humans with the capacity to make choices. Their inherent free will makes them unpredictable. We can, however, use analytical concepts to appreciate the nature and range of choices political leaders have. And if we apply them appropriately, we

[7]Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, 2nd ed., New York, Praeger, 1965.

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should be able to anticipate some of the consequences of the choices they do make. We will do well if we achieve that much in anticipating the future.

In judging the coup and its meaning for the future of Soviet politics, again Huntington's distinction between political development and political decay has much to recommend it as a point of departure. The coup appears to mark a point from which acceleration in the process of decay has occurred. Political development has only marginally begun. Building new institutions that underpin strong states may be possible after the coup in a way that it was not previously. Where new institutions are built that can accommodate the growing demand for political and economic participation, political stability and possibly "polyarchy" will follow. In other words, reasonably strong state institutions will have to precede the emergence of liberal democracy. Some republics may resort to praetorian rule. Many of the efforts at institutionalization will prove transitory. The post-coup deal worked out for a state council that can hold a number of the republics loosely together is almost certain to prove temporary. The same is true for several of the republic governments.

Finally, we should remember that about two decades ago, Robert C. Tucker made a plea that students of Soviet politics pay attention to the concept of "political culture." It is all the more relevant today, although applying the concept has proven difficult, not only in the Soviet Union but also in other states. It does appear, however, to play a large role in determining political behavior from state to state even when most other variables are essentially held constant. Today we can no longer speak of a Soviet political culture. We must deal with a large number of ethnically and regionally based political cultures in the various republics and autonomous regions. If we ignore them, we could be in for some nasty surprises about future developments.

Conclusion

Is the abortive coup a fundamental turning point in Soviet politics? It looks that way. Whether we view it in the closest and most immediate perspective, or as a logical consequence of the dynamics of six years of *perestroyka*, or in historical perspective, looking back not only decades but even a few centuries, it appears to be a critical marker. Yet, it is too early to be absolutely sure. The kaleidoscope of events in the Soviet Union over the past few years has been so great that it is easy to misjudge the significance of any single event. Like Kornilov's coup in 1917, it could turn out to be a mere footnote as other events overtake it and render its apparent significance exaggerated.

As of a few weeks after the event, however, it seems unlikely to fade into a footnote. It has catalyzed so many actions in its immediate aftermath that it seems bound to remain a critical historical marker. The independence of the Baltic republics, the dissolution of the Communist party, the actions to transform the KGB and the military, and the formal action by the Congress of People's Deputies for all practical purposes to dissolve itself have so basically changed the political topography of the old Soviet Union that imagining more momentous change in such a short period is difficult. History, however, has played some strange tricks on us, and undoubtedly it will do so again.

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The Fourth Russian Revolution: Historical Perspectives

Anatole Shub

Russia was known by those who knew it best to have been always in fact democratic at heart, in all the vital habits of her thought, in all the intimate relationships of her people that spoke their natural instinct, their habitual attitude towards life.

—Woodrow Wilson, April 2, 1917.

In building the so-called radiant future, we have been to hell and back, as they say. . . . But we have still had the strength to stop, and then begin the process of a most difficult ascent to normal life.

—Boris Yel'tsin, September 11, 1991.

THE events that followed the failed Soviet coup d'état of August 19–21, 1991—namely, the end of communist rule and the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into sovereign national states—have been characterized by George F. Kennan and others as perhaps the most important in a thousand years of Russian history. Soviet commentators have compared the end of the Bolshevik "experiment" (1917–91) with the lifting of the Tatar yoke (1240–1480) and Russia's emergence from the Time of Troubles (1598–1613).

The drama of August 1991 marked a significant (although perhaps not the final) climax of the fourth Russian revolution of this century: a democratic, anti-totalitarian surge from below that, transcending fitful attempts at reform from above, withstood and (in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic states, Moldova, and Armenia) overcame the resistance of the Communist establishment. While the origins of this democratic wave can be traced back through the "dissidents" of the 1960's to deep historical roots, its amplitude began to attract world attention with the partly free elections to the first USSR Congress of People's Deputies in March 1989. It was then that millions of voters in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, the Baltic republics, and elsewhere rejected official Communist candidates in favor of democrats and independents (Boris Yel'tsin won an 80 percent majority for the all-Moscow seat). Freer elections a year later for republic and local offices strengthened democratic forces: non-Communist governments emerged in 6 of the 15 Soviet republics, and the Communist organizations in Russia and Ukraine began to split. Last June 12, Yel'tsin was elected Russian president, over five other candidates, with a majority of 57 percent, thereby attaining a legitimacy that no Communist leader had ever enjoyed and that proved crucial in repelling the August coup.

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Rectifying the Past

As the Puritans evoked the judges and prophets of the Old Testament, the French revolutionaries recalled the Roman Republic, and Lenin assumed the mantle of the Jacobins, a high degree of historical consciousness has informed the fourth Russian revolution. This was apparent both in its hours of triumph and in its antecedents:

- In taking such actions as removing Lenin statues, restoring the name of St. Petersburg, and enacting a Declaration of Human Rights and Freedoms, the fourth revolution pronounced clear historical judgment on its

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three predecessors. It expressly repudiated the Lenin-Trotsky coup of October 25, 1917, hitherto officially labeled the Great October Socialist Revolution. In doing so, it implicitly reaffirmed the democratic values that had animated the first two revolutions: the one in 1905, which gave Russia a semi-constitutional regime, including an elected parliament (the State Duma); and the one in February [O.S.] 1917, which overthrew tsarism and briefly made Russia (in Lenin's words) "the freest country in the world." President Wilson and other contemporaries hailed the February Revolution as the culmination of a century-long struggle against autocracy, originally inspired by the libertarian ideals of the American and French revolutions. Indeed, the first of Russia's democrats, Aleksandr Radishchev, exiled by Catherine II, composed an ode to George Washington; the greatest of them, Aleksandr Herzen, warned in 1867 that socialism without liberty would degenerate into "autocratic communism."

• In June 1917, the issues at stake—national unity or class war, fidelity to the Western allies or capitulation to imperial Germany—had been epitomized in a dramatic debate at the first All-Russian Congress of Soviets between Lenin, who evoked the French Convention of 1792, and Alexander Kerensky, who warned against terror and dictatorship. The alternatives of August 1991—freedom or empire, the great antinomy of Russian history identified by the liberal historians Vasiliy Klyuchevskiy and Pavel Milyukov early in this century—were similarly prefigured at the first Congress of People's Deputies (May 25–June 9, 1989). In nationally televised debates, Andrey Sakharov, the historian Yuriy Afanas'yev, Olympic weightlifter Yuriy Vlasov, and others challenged the Communist party, the KGB, and the military establishment in the name of liberal democracy. The xenophobic Russian writer Valentin Rasputin contemptuously compared them with the moderate leaders of March 1917, the "Kerenskys, Milyukovs, Guchkovs, Chkheidzes." Rasputin then deliberately repeated the famous words uttered by the tsarist premier of 1906–11 and champion of "Russia one and indivisible," Petr Stolypin: "You, gentlemen, need great upheavals—we need a great Russia!"[1]

Rasputin and fellow xenophobes later joined General Valentin Varennikov, war-industry "tsar" Oleg Baklanov and other future coup leaders in two notorious public appeals: a demand on December 19, 1990, that Gorbachev impose martial law (a move apparently intended as the signal for a planned crackdown, one that was averted by Eduard Shevardnadze's warning against dictatorship the next day); and the "Word to the People" of July 23, 1991, an open call for a coup against Gorbachev. Marshal Sergey Akhromeyev, who shot himself after the coup failed, had vigorously joined in the ugly attacks on Sakharov at the first Congress; weeks before the coup, he barred publication of an anti-Stalinist study of Soviet readiness for World War II.

• The swift historical judgment rendered on the Leninist experiment after the coup was a direct result of a tidal wave of historical revelations under *glasnost'*. A limited exercise at first, the process of restoring historical truth began to escape from party control after October 1987, when Yel'tsin angered Gorbachev by raising a score of objections to the latter's draft report on the 70th anniversary of Lenin's coup. While condemning Stalin's crimes as "unforgivable," the report spoke of mere "thousands" of victims and included a lengthy defense of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Even this compromise failed to satisfy the party hard core, which responded, under the byline of Nina Andreyeva, a Leningrad chemistry teacher, that "We Will Not Renounce Our Principles!" The three weeks of official silence (March 13–April 5, 1988) that followed the appearance of this Stalinist manifesto in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* dramatized the fragility of *perestroyka,* and spurred democrats to act on their own. Thenceforth, official disclosures from "above," mostly under the aegis of Aleksandr Yakovlev, barely kept pace with a mass movement for historical justice, led by non-Communist intellectuals, liberal journalists, and former political prisoners. The movement took organized form in the "Memorial" society, with branches throughout the country. These historical crusaders not only wrote articles and published documents; from Minsk to Magadan, they began to unearth the mass graves of Stalin's victims and to locate surviving witnesses to decades of crimes against humanity. In the course of 1988 (encouraged in part by President Reagan's visit to Moscow and the cessation of jamming of Western broadcasts), the fear that had gripped millions of Soviet citizens for decades began to yield to measured hopes for real change.

In the first half of 1989, the demands for historical justice moved decisively past "de-Stalinization" to address Lenin's legacy. Three articles by Boris Vasiliyev in *Izvestiya* of January 16–18 spotlighted a fateful turning point—January 18, 1918, when Lenin forcibly dissolved the All-Russian Constituent Assembly that had been elected after his coup by 45 million voters (27 mil-

[1]The Stolypin agrarian reforms won considerable respect, but as a result of his actions in dissolving the liberal, popularly elected Second Duma, the adjectival form of his name entered the Russian language in two other expressions: "Stolypin railcars," used to convoy political prisoners to Siberia, and "Stolypin neckties," a reference to the hangings decreed by field courts-martial under his authority.

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lion of whom voted for democratic socialists; only 10 million, for the Bolsheviks). Amid rising grass roots cries of "Back to February!" the first USSR Congress of People's Deputies (a third of whose members had been competitively elected, for the first time since the Constituent Assembly) stimulated publication in the Soviet Union of both Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* and Vasiliy Grossman's *Forever Flowing*, with its powerful indictment of Lenin. On the bicentennial of the French Revolution in July 1989, Yakovlev renounced the Marxist-Leninist credo that saw violence as a "midwife" of social change. Afanas'yev, a co-chairman with Sakharov and Yel'tsin of the Interregional Group of democratic-minded deputies, challenged the legitimacy of Soviet rule:

To give a legal foundation to a regime that was brought into being through bloodshed, with the aid of mass murders and crimes against humanity, is only possible by resorting to falsification and lies—as has been done up till now. It must be admitted that the whole of Soviet history is not fit to serve as a legal basis for the Soviet regime.

Despite Russian nationalist cries of "Russophobia" and repeated efforts to muzzle liberal media, the tide of historical revelations continued to rise, encompassing thousands of particular truths about virtually every significant episode of Soviet history. Spurred on by the revolutions in Eastern Europe, the continuous "deconstruction" of official mythology energized democrats while shaming the dwindling ranks of regime loyalists. In 1990, several journals began serializing the memoirs of Kerensky and of General Anton Denikin, the leading White commander of the Civil War; both memoirs discussed, as a matter of fact, the imperial German subsidy (40 million gold marks) paid to Lenin's Bolsheviks between 1915 and July 1918. The elections of 1990 sent former political prisoners into the parliaments of Russia, Ukraine, and other republics, where they immediately pressed for national sovereignty and radical reforms. The early months of 1991 brought, inter alia, new confirmation of Lenin's personal responsibility for the slaughter of the imperial family in July 1918, and strong democratic resistance to various mini-coups and coup rehearsals before the August showdown.

From Thaw to Revolution

The revival of historical memory and renewed struggle for freedom had, of course, begun three decades before Gorbachev's *glasnost'*. Three months after Stalin's death in March 1953, news of the East German revolt and rumors of a Kremlin amnesty set off a wave of strikes in forced labor camps at Vorkuta, Noril'sk, Karaganda, and elsewhere (Vorkuta miners again led the "radicals" in 1989–91). The ensuing release of millions of political prisoners, including a few surviving Old Bolsheviks, directly stimulated Khrushchev's "secret" anti-Stalin speech on February 23, 1956. Upon learning of the speech a week later, the poet Anna Akhmatova observed: "Now two Russias will confront each other: those who 'sat' [in prisons and camps], and those who put them there."

The confrontation, which enveloped Soviet satrapies in Eastern Europe, lasted 35 years—or until the leadership generation that had helped to wage Stalin's terror, or profited from it, had largely passed from the scene. Tat'yana Tolstaya recently observed that after Khrushchev's speech, only a few simple-minded older people continued to believe in communism, while the leaders and most *apparatchiki* were total cynics anxious only to preserve their privileges. (Nevertheless, as recently as January 1990, a KGB department head did not hesitate, in an interview with the "patriotic" monthly *Molodaya Gvardiya*, to invoke *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Lenin's most repugnant justification of mass terror.)

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956, hailed at stormy rallies of Leningrad and Moscow university students, led Khrushchev to drop "de-Stalinization" for five years; Boris Pasternak was officially ostracized for *Doctor Zhivago*. But Khrushchev's second anti-Stalin campaign, after October 1961, brought more substantial disclosures and had greater political resonance, particularly after *Novyy Mir* published Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* in November 1962.[2]

A neo-Stalinist restoration arrived on August 20, 1968, with the invasion of Czechoslovakia, which Dr. Ivan Sviták and others in Prague believed was directed primarily against the Russian intelligentsia. The months and months of tank maneuvers across Poland, Ukraine, and Belorussia, before and after August, helped provoke an economic crisis in 1969–70 that—just as the demographic toll of the Stalin era began to shrink the work force—marked the end of extensive Soviet growth. The popular motto thereafter was: "We pretend to work; they pretend to pay us."

With the seizure of Prague, an ice age descended on Soviet historical studies. The "gray cardinal" of party ideology, Mikhail Suslov, censored even the "complete" edition of Lenin's works. However, the new repres-

[2]Even after Khrushchev's fall, the Moscow intelligentsia managed to publish such illuminating works as Eduard Burdzhalov's history of the February Revolution and (with a few cuts) Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*, arguably the ultimate imaginative insight into Stalinist society.

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sion met resistance from a new democratic movement, led by Sakharov. Its legalistic strategies and nonviolent tactics enlisted international media in support of the "dissidents" and, ultimately, Western governments in support of "human rights." It is now clear that among the educated Soviet elite, censorship, jamming, and other forms of repression never fully prevailed over the oppositional literature of *samizdat* and *tamizdat* and the Western radio stations that broadcast these works to millions, thus continuing the historical discussion.

The disclosures of 1956–64 were not forgotten. When, for example, KGB chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov officially reported in February 1990 that between 1930 and 1953, exactly 3,778,564 Soviet citizens had been arrested and 786,098 had been executed for alleged "counterrevolutionary" crimes, the independent biweekly *Argumenty i Fakty* (circulation: 33 million) promptly recalled an earlier, previously unpublished report by the KGB to a party commission appointed by Khrushchev. According to that report, during the great purges alone—between January 1, 1935, and June 22, 1941—some 19,840,000 persons had been arrested, 7 million had been shot, and most of the others had perished in the camps.

The historical memory of the Soviet intelligentsia was by no means confined to the Khrushchev period or the Stalin era, as their media showed from 1988 on. Out of restricted library shelves, classified archives, family collections, and the personal recollections of survivors (often in their 80's or 90's), there came not only massive corroboration of Stalinist atrocities, but the early warnings against Leninist dictatorship by revered radicals (Georgiy Plekhanov, Vladimir Korolenko, Petr Kropotkin, Rosa Luxemburg); the anti-revolutionary essays of Petr Struve, Nikolay Berdyayev, and other leaders of the pre-1914 intelligentsia; and the entire 19th-century political heritage, including distinguished liberals and moderate reformers, as well as "Slavophiles" and radical "Westernizers." Moreover, the Soviet elite displayed an amazing familiarity with the work of Russian émigrés and Western scholars. Russian and Ukrainian journals, for example, were quick to serialize Robert Conquest's *The Great Terror* and *Harvest of Sorrow*.[3]

A myriad of other examples could be cited, moreover, in film as well as in prose. In August 1988, for example, a television documentary, "Risk II," showed shocking German footage of Soviet villagers in 1941 burning red flags and Stalin portraits, and columns of Red Army soldiers surrendering to the Wehrmacht.

Permanent Civil War

The panorama of Soviet history that emerged vividly from these thousands of personal and documentary disclosures bore little resemblance to Stalin's *Short Course*, Trotsky's sophistries, neo-Leninist apologetics that ranked Stalin with Cromwell and Napoleon, intellectual paeans to the Finland Station, or the fairy tales purveyed by Beatrice and Sidney Webb (*Soviet Russia: A New Civilization*), Ambassador Joseph E. Davies (*Mission to Moscow*), and Lillian Hellman (in her script for the movie "North Star"). Nor did the emerging authentic history of the Soviet travail confirm either old racist prejudices that identified the Russian people with their Mongol conquerors or classified them as *untermenschen* (born slaves) or the long-fashionable notions that the disparaging aperçus of the Marquis de Custine in 1839 represented the last word on Russian society.

The emerging history accepted pre-1914 Russia—the Russia of Chekhov and Chaliapin—at face value: i.e., as portrayed in its own rich literature, in countless volumes of memoirs, contemporary journalistic accounts, and the standard (i.e., non-Bolshevik) histories by Klyuchevskiy, Milyukov, George Vernadsky, Michael Karpovich, Marc Raeff, and others. This was a dynamic, highly complex society. In many ways, the Russia of 1914 was still several decades "behind" its western neighbors, but it had been "catching up," despite contradictions that were obvious to all: notably, between rapid economic modernization and a brilliant cosmopolitan culture, on the one hand, and —on the other—a backward rural population and antiquated political structures that had only been partly reformed. The overwhelming Soviet nostalgia, even before *glasnost'*, for this "silver age" is not difficult to understand. Academician Dmitriy Likhachev has remarked that compared with his later experiences, which included years in the Solovetskiy Island labor camps and blockaded Leningrad, his boyhood in old St. Petersburg (described by his schoolmate Vladimir Nabokov in *Speak, Memory*) was "paradise."

As most contemporaries recognized, the primary cause of Russia's tragic detour from "normal" patterns of European development was the "cursed war of 1914," the first "total war." (It ended four dynasties; spawned Bolshevism, Fascism, and Nazism; demoralized republican France for decades; and seriously weakened the British Empire.) More than the ineptitude of Nicholas II, it was the German eastern offensive of 1915 (overrunning Poland and Lithuania), the pyrrhic Russian counteroffensive of 1916, and the 1916 military

[3]New materials published in other Soviet periodicals in turn enabled the author to update his works. New Soviet disclosures similiarly enriched Robert C. Tucker's masterful *Stalin in Power: The Revolution from Above, 1928–41*.

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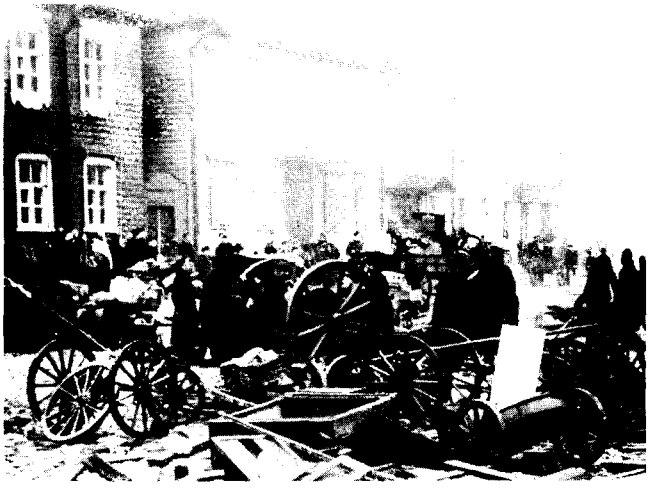

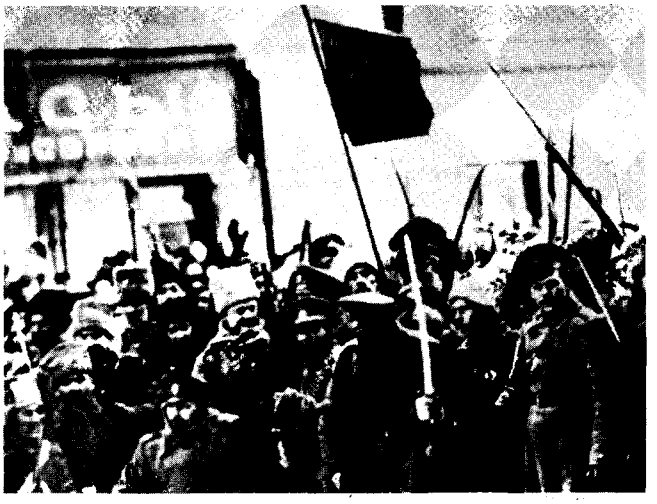

The first three Russian revolutions: at top, unrest during the 1905 revolution in Moscow; in the middle, a scene from February 1917 in Petrograd; and, at bottom, a column of soldiers demonstrate in Moscow under the banner "Communism" in October 1917.

—Novosti from Sovfoto.

callup of reservists—including peasant heads of household (which accelerated inflation and urban shortages of food and fuel)—that brought on the February Revolution. The capture of Riga by the advancing German armies on September 3, 1917, directly precipitated General Lavr Kornilov's attempted coup that soon left moderate and democratic forces—already divided over the war—defenseless against the Bolsheviks.

"Turn your guns against your officers" had been Lenin's first reaction to the outbreak of war in 1914, refined a few days later into the formula "Turn the imperialist war into a civil war," which he succeeded in implementing in 1918. The history of the Soviet dictatorship is, in essence, a history of permanent civil war—"class struggle" conducted as a matter of policy by Lenin, Stalin, and their heirs against the active opposition and/or passive resistance of the peoples and authentic leaders of Russia, Ukraine, and all the other nations of the empire without exception, none of whom ever accepted Bolshevik rule except under extreme duress.

At almost every critical point over the course of seven decades, that war was conducted on the basis of faulty intellectual, as well as dubious moral, premises. Urging an armed uprising in September-October 1917, Lenin with fanatical certainty argued that it would spark a world revolution and that the country already supported the Bolsheviks; Lev Kamenev and others told him flatly that there would be no world revolution but that a coup would surely lead to civil war. Until the very brink of disaster in March 1921, when Kronstadt sailors, Tambov peasants, and Petrograd workers had risen against him, Lenin clung to the class-war economics of "war communism"; his 1919 party platform, embodying those principles—to which (as Gavriil Popov has shown) Stalin remained remarkably true—was not replaced until 1961.

Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP) came too late to prevent nationwide famine and a typhus epidemic. Millions of lives were saved by Herbert Hoover's American Relief Administration, which Kamenev, acting premier after Lenin's stroke, welcomed to the country. (Lenin had issued a futile appeal to the "world proletariat" for aid.) Moreover, the limited economic liberalization was accompanied by new political repressions (a violent campaign against organized religion, a crackdown on dissidence in party ranks, a show trial of Socialist Revolutionaries [who had been inactive since 1919], the expulsion from the country of prominent intellectuals, "Bolshevization" of schools and libraries, etc.).

During Stalin's "secret" tour of Siberia in January 1928, which ended the NEP (his speeches and telegrams, along with local dissents, were not published until 1991), he predicted that criminal prosecution of peasants for "speculation" would "triple" grain deliver-

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ies and that collectivization (i.e., the restoration of serfdom) would swiftly bring a modernized agriculture that would generate massive grain exports. Economists like Nikolay Kondrat'yev, agronomists like Aleksandr Chayanov, and all sorts of Communists (Sergey Syrtsov, V. V. "Soso" Lominadze, Aleksey Smirnov, Moisey Frumkin, etc.) knew better and said so. Martemyan Ryutin branded Stalin the "evil genius of the revolution" and called for his removal. In the event, Stalin's brutal policies dealt Soviet agriculture and animal husbandry a blow from which they have yet to recover.[4]

The breakneck pace at which Stalin forced industrialization, raising the targets of the first five-year plan several times, produced meager results. None of the original five-year plans was ever fulfilled. Between 1928 and 1941, Soviet national income (largely produced by convicts and serfs) is now estimated by liberal economists to have increased by a mere 50 percent, rather than fivefold, as officially claimed until recently.

Stalin's foreign adventures likewise led to one debacle after another. Most disastrous, of course, was his abiding infatuation with Hitler. In the summer of 1941, a desperate Stalin begged Roosevelt and Churchill to send American and British troops to the Russian front; by September, he was making secret overtures to Berlin for a "second Brest-Litovsk" capitulation. Two thousand aircraft delivered by the Allies helped stop the Wehrmacht at the gates of Moscow; massive Lend-Lease aid enabled the Red Army to hold at Stalingrad and take the offensive in 1943. Stalin's postwar conquests, which alienated all the peoples involved and provoked their neighbors to "cold war" resistance, have now virtually all been—or are being—disgorged.

Stalin's final error was to imagine that he could always act as he had in 1937: imprisoning the wives of Politburo members, threatening in October 1952 to replace his old gang (Vyacheslav Molotov, Anastas Mikoyan, Kliment Voroshilov, et al.) with junior Stalinists like Leonid Brezhnev and Suslov. In mid-February 1953, however, secret police chief Lavrentiy Beria, reluctant to follow his predecessors Nikolay Yezhov and Genrikh Yagoda to oblivion, arrested Stalin's longtime *chef de cabinet* and chief of personal security; Stalin's personal physician was already being held in the case of the alleged "doctors' plot." On the night of March 1, at Stalin's Kuntsevo dacha, Beria stood over his master's stricken body and assured retainers that no doctors need be called: "Comrade Stalin's in a deep sleep." Georgiy Malenkov (a colleague of Yezhov's in the 1930's) agreed.

The next morning, Khrushchev did call doctors, some of whom applied leeches to the erstwhile "coryphaeus of science," but to no avail. Nor were Khrushchev's attempts to revive "Leninism" successful. His follies included new anti-religious campaigns and the merger of villages into "agro-cities," as well as construction of the Berlin Wall, the Cuban missile crisis, and conflict with China. Among Soviet citizens, his promises to overtake the United States in per capita meat and milk consumption, and to build "communism" by 1980, soon became the subject of bitter jokes.

His successor, Brezhnev, awarded himself medals, stoked the arms race, magnified pollution, indulged corruption, and blundered into Afghanistan. The old guard managed to hold back change until Brezhnev and his cronies (Suslov, Dmitriy Ustinov, Yuriy Andropov, and Konstantin Chernenko) had enjoyed the best of Soviet medical care and huge state funerals at which only the widows wept.

Beneath the surface of conformity, however, the Soviet peoples lived their own moral lives. Throughout this shameful period, the bard Vladimir Vyssotskiy sang of Russia's wounded souls and humble hopes; and, as it ended, Shevardnadze allocated Georgian television funds to film an anti-totalitarian classic, Tengiz Abduladze's *Repentance*.

Balance Sheet of Terror

The human toll exacted by the great "experiment" was staggering. As Lenin had promised, it decimated entire social classes, the very classes that had spurred Russia's modernization: aristocracy and gentry, merchants and artisans, peasant proprietors, the intelligentsia above all. The figure of 67 million seems to be emerging as a conservative consensus estimate of the total casualties,[5] but no such total can ever convey the meaning of the individual human losses, from Andrey Shingarev and Fedor Kokoshkin, the liberal ministers murdered in their hospital beds by Red Guards in January 1918, to Anatoliy Marchenko, the eloquent worker-dissident who died in a labor-camp hunger strike in December 1986 (a martyrdom that prompted Gorbachev's release of Sakharov from exile). In a recent appeal for civic peace and ethnic tolerance,[6] Elena Bonner evoked the history of the USSR known in every household:

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[4]Even its modest capacity to provide city-dwellers with subsistence levels of food was largely due to the "private plots" and other concessions extracted from Stalin by the moderate Politburo majority, with whom he had to contend during his political "mid-life crisis" (1932–34).

[5]By the main categories, 20 million between 1914 and 1922, only 1.5 million attributable to the battlefields of World War I, the rest to civil war, terror, and famine produced by "War Communism"; 10 million, by Stalin's estimate, in the collectivization of agriculture; perhaps as many in the Great Terror; 27 million in World War II.

[6]*Izvestiya* (Moscow), Aug. 29, 1991.

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Elena Bonner and Andrey Sakharov in Moscow.

—AP/Wide World.

Leaf through your family albums. Gather in the kitchen and, with tea, remember your aunts and uncles, your cousins, your neighbors in town and country. Will you find in our country even a single family that did not lose an uncle or grandfather somewhere on the Yenisey? Among whom there was no "dekulakization"? Among whom a mother's brother or sister did not perish in the White or the Red Army? Among whom nobody was arrested in 1920, 1923, 1929, 1933, 1935, 1937, 1940? If you find such a family, then surely someone fell in the battle for some "unknown hill"—a brother, father, or sister. You lost nobody? Then someone went to Kolyma after a severe captivity. . . . In every family there is someone for whom, if not you, then your mother or grandmother wept.

In every family, indeed. On November 28, 1990, in the midst of his attempted appeasement of the hard-liners, Gorbachev, the quintessential "new Soviet man," spoke for the first time of his own family —and indirectly explained, perhaps, his persistent reluctance to endorse the old-style crackdown that the hard-liners demanded:

Take my two grandfathers. One was convicted for failing to fulfill the sowing plan, though this was because half the family had died of starvation. They sent him to Irkutsk to cut timber, leaving behind this tormented family, half of which had perished in 1933.

And my other grandfather, a collective-farm organizer . . . . He was also imprisoned, tortured for 14 months and interrogated, and he confessed to things he had not done and so on. Well, thank God, he survived. But I lived in that plague house, that house of an "enemy of the people" that no one, not even relatives, dared enter. . . .

In captivity in the presidential dacha at Foros last August, Gorbachev's wife Raisa Maksimovna (who also lost a grandfather to Stalinism) tried to care for her daughter, son-in-law, and little granddaughter, but could not sleep. According to Ivan Silayev, who came to free them, she had been haunted by thoughts of Nicholas and Alexandra Romanov, their hemophiliac son, and four daughters, murdered in July 1918 in Ekaterinburg. Ekaterinburg—for a time called Sverdlovsk under the Soviet regime—was the home town of the Gorbachevs' principal redeemer, Boris Nikolayevich Yel'tsin.

A Journey Resumed

It is far easier to enumerate the difficulties facing the peoples of the former USSR in their efforts to re-create "normal" societies than it is to predict precisely how they may finally (as did Germany, Italy, and Spain) secure democratic institutions, develop thriving modern economies, and achieve West European standards of education, public health, and environmental safety. The tasks ahead are daunting; in many respects, the Soviet peoples start now from "year zero" or close to it. Analyzing their difficulties, and all the twists and turns along the way, will surely occupy substantial intellectual industries, in the post-Soviet capitals and abroad, for decades to come.

The miracle, however, has already occurred. How was it, after all, that peoples so long oppressed and humiliated found the strength to rise again, and the wit to do so without provoking violence? And how many dared predict that the most murderous regime in modern history would, after the passing of its founding generations, gradually begin to flinch at the prospect of shedding further blood and, ultimately, collapse within 72 hours?

In seeking clues to the answers, some may wish to examine nuclear-weapons balances; others, computer printouts of economic projections. Russians, and those who know them, need look no farther than the authentic history of the three previous revolutions—and the unique heritage of Pushkin and Herzen, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky.

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The Deconstruction of the USSR and the Search for a Post-Soviet Community

Mark R. Beissinger

THERE is great irony in the fact that the events that set in motion the final collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics began only two days before a treaty constituting a renewed and thoroughly revamped USSR was to be signed. Yet, behind this circumstance lurks the broader meaning of the extraordinary events of August 1991, as well as the dilemmas unleashed by the inauguration of the long-awaited post-Soviet era.

The August coup must be understood primarily as a nationalities crisis—indeed, the final nationalities crisis of a decaying and exhausted political order. The impending dissolution of the USSR had been visible for years, although some persisted in denying its possibility.[1] The main issues confronting the USSR were not whether a breakup would occur, but rather when it would occur, under what circumstances, and how far it would proceed. Rather than causing the disintegration of the USSR, the events of August merely furnished the setting in which that disintegration transpired, providing a cathartic end to an empire whose legitimating myth had long been punctured, whose institutions were crumbling, and which was clearly headed toward collapse in any case.[2]

"The Soviet Union is finished," Arkadiy Murashov, one of the leaders of Democratic Russia, told journalists in early September as the USSR Congress of People's Deputies voted itself into retirement.[3] Yet, no sooner had the patient been pronounced dead than new attempts were being made to resuscitate him. Indeed, the persistence of the search for some form of supranational community that transcends empire is striking.

This essay examines the collapse of the USSR and the viability of current attempts to revive some form of transnational community among the USSR's former republics. Based on experience elsewhere in the world, it analyzes the challenges that are likely to be presented by alternative approaches to constituting a nonimperial, post-Soviet community, as well as the more lasting legacies that the specific circumstances of the deconstruction of the Soviet Union are likely to leave for the fu-

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[1]The most vocal of those who refused to admit the prospect of a breakup was Jerry Hough, who only several months before the events of August wrote that "the assumption that the Soviet Union is now revolutionary—and that it may even be disintegrating as a country—contradicts all that we know about revolution and national integration" and was "based on the least comparative perspective." Hough argued that nationalist unrest had been unleashed by Mikhail Gorbachev as part of a conscious plan to consolidate his personal power, and that secessions in general are rarely successful endeavors. "The most rebellious republics," Hough maintained, "may not formally recognize Soviet hegemony, but . . . they will de facto remain part of the country." Jerry F. Hough, "Understanding Gorbachev: The Importance of Politics," *Soviet Economy* (Washington, DC), No. 2, 1991, pp. 102, 106. Four weeks after the coup, Hough continued to maintain that "the Soviet Union is not breaking up (except, maybe, in the Baltics—2 percent of the Soviet population—and not necessarily there)," and that Gorbachev had "achieved the increase in power towards which he had been working for the past year—but in stronger form than he hoped." *Politics of Soviet Economic Reform* (Durham, NC), Sept. 15, 1991, p. 1.

[2]Several years ago, Lubomyr Hajda and I argued that Gorbachev ought to follow a policy of "selective dismemberment" of the country—that is, allowing the Baltic republics, Moldova, and the Transcaucasian republics to leave, while seeking to negotiate some type of new political arrangement with the remainder of the country. It is arguable that had Gorbachev moved more quickly to assuage those Soviet nations that sought independent statehood, the crises he now confronts might not have been as deep nor as potentially dangerous to international stability as those unleashed by the August coup. See Mark Beissinger and Lubomyr Hajda, "Nationalism and Reform in Soviet Politics," in Lubomyr Hajda and Mark Beissinger, Eds., *The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Politics and Society*, Boulder, CO, Westview 1990, p. 320.

[3]Associated Press, Sept. 5, 1991.

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ture politics of what used to be the USSR.

The Empire's Last Gasp

In construing the politics of the post-Soviet world, we would be wise to heed de Tocqueville's advice with regard to American politics: "the whole man is there, if one may put it so, in the cradle."[4] It is clear that the motivation behind the coup was a sharpening crisis of center-republic relations. The organizers of the coup understood their action primarily as an attempt to forestall what they viewed as the imminent demise of their country. In the State Emergency Committee's "Appeal to the Soviet People," its main statement justifying the seizure of power, the Committee condemned what it called "extremist forces" who had "adopted a course of destroying the Soviet Union."[5] As Gennadiy Yanayev noted at the infamous press conference following the emergency declaration:

A real threat of disintegration has arisen, the breakup of a single economic space, a single space of civil rights, a single defense, and a single foreign policy. Normal life in these circumstances is impossible. In many regions of the USSR, as a result of multinational, inter-ethnic clashes, there is bloodshed, and the breakup of the USSR would entail the most serious internal and international consequences. Under these circumstances, we have no other choice but to take decisive measures in order to stop the slide of the country toward catastrophe.[6]

What is striking about the diagnoses presented by Yanayev and the committee is not how false they were but how true they rang. In the weeks preceding the coup, Lithuania and Russia signed an agreement recognizing each other as sovereign states; the Ukrainian government—which remained undecided about whether it would sign the new Union treaty—had prepared the printing of a separate Ukrainian currency;[7] and Kirgiz President Askar Akaev officially transferred the all-Union enterprises on the territory of his republic to republic jurisdiction.[8] Military conscription figures for 1991 were so low that the military hierarchy threatened to do away with draft exemptions, causing students at some universities to strike.

Most ominous of all to the conservatives was the latest version of the new Union treaty, which Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Belorussia were set to sign on August 20. Although creating what was referred to in the treaty as a "federal" government, the document in actuality would have established a loose confederation of states—one whose center was likely to have been consumed by conflicts over authority with its constituent parts. Moreover, the Novo-Ogarevo agreement—which formed the basis for the treaty—had never been accepted by the conservatives inasmuch as it legitimized the partial dissolution of the USSR and a radical decentralization of powers to those republics that remained. A statement by Supreme Soviet Chairman Anatoliy Luk'yanov dated August 16 but circulated by TASS on August 19 decried the Novo-Ogarevo agreement because it did not contain measures that promised to end the "war of laws" between the center and the republics. Luk'yanov's statement also specifically criticized the latest version of the treaty (which had been agreed to on July 23, but was only made public in *Izvestiya* on August 15) for changing the name of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Union of Soviet Sovereign Republics, for its inadequate protection of the USSR's "single economic space," and for its failure to "secure continuity in the operation of bodies of state authority."[9]

The most important aspect of the State Emergency Committee's three-day nationalities policy was its rejection of the treaty and firm promise to hold the country together. The plotters do not appear to have thought much beyond that. Yanayev claimed that the committee had "a program of activities aimed at lowering the tension that exists in the field of inter-ethnic relations," including "very specific plans connected with settling problems between Armenia and Azerbaijan."[10] But the committee's trivial understanding of nationalities problems was evident in its first statement, which proclaimed that "our multi-ethnic people have lived for ages full of pride for their motherland." What would have happened to nationalist leaders had the military and KGB rank and file obeyed the orders of their superiors is clear; the committee's first statement demanded that nationalist leaders be brought to account "for the deaths of hundreds of victims of inter-ethnic conflicts," and said that "the fate of more than half a mil-

[4]Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, translated by George Lawrence, Garden City, NY, Doubleday and Company, 1969, p. 31.
[5]*Pravda* (Moscow), Aug. 20, 1991.
[6]Ibid.
[7]*Kommersant* (Moscow), July 15–22, 1991.
[8]Radio Liberty, *Report on the USSR* (Munich), Aug. 23, 1991, pp. 26–27.
[9]"Luk'yanov Urges More Discussion of Union Treaty," TASS, Aug. 19, 1991, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-SOV*), Aug. 20, 1991, p. 25; "Luk'yanov Discusses Amending Union Treaty," TASS, Aug. 19, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 19, 1991, pp. 19–20. For a similar statement by the USSR Council of Ministers, see *Report on the USSR*, Aug. 30, 1991, p. 34.
[10]*Pravda*, Aug. 20, 1991.

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lion refugees" was "on their conscience."[11]

Significantly enough, the political institutions that were envisioned in the final version of the Union treaty were precisely those that were created in the aftermath of the coup, when the central government had completely collapsed. In this sense, Soviet federalism died before the coup took place. The July draft of the Union treaty called for a bicameral Supreme Soviet, whose upper house—the Council of Republics—would consist of equal numbers of representatives of the republics who would cast their votes in a single bloc. The upper house would exercise veto power over those laws passed by the lower house—the Council of the Union—which would be selected in districts based on population size. Moreover, republics would have the right to suspend all-Union laws on their territory if those laws did not conform to republic laws.[12] The new Union treaty would have transferred nearly all economic property to the control of the republics, legitimized separate foreign policies for republic governments, and allowed republics to secede if they so desired. In other words, the new Union treaty would have transformed the Soviet Union into a confederal state. When Luk'yanov told RSFSR Supreme Soviet First Deputy Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov in the midst of the coup that "it was Yel'tsin who had caused Gorbachev's illness because of his intransigence in Union-treaty matters,"[13] he was reflecting the outlook of those who had taken it upon themselves to reverse what they saw as the impending collapse of their country.

The point is that in spite of all of Gorbachev's attempts to prevent it from happening, the USSR on the eve of the coup was on a trajectory that would have resulted in an extreme devolution of power to the republics and the country's partial dismemberment—whether the coup had taken place or not. Nor is it clear that the new Union treaty, had it been signed, would have saved the USSR in any form, since the main conflicts over all-Union and republic authority were yet to be fought.

Multiple Paths to Independence

What so transformed the situation in the aftermath of the coup was the complete collapse of the institutions of the center—the Communist party, the military, and the secret police. In many parts of the country, the party was outlawed and its property was nationalized; the Central Committee Secretariat was also shut down. As Lev Ter-Petrosian, president of Armenia, observed, the center had "committed suicide."[14]

It was the Ukrainian declaration of independence on August 24, however, that dealt the final death-blow to the new Union treaty and the idea of a renewed federal Soviet state. Without Ukraine, Russia would have been linked in a Union with Muslim Central Asia—cutting it off from the West in a strange marriage between Russian liberal Westernizers and Muslim party strongmen. As Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev, a key supporter of the Union treaty, observed in the aftermath of Ukraine's decision:

It is clear to me that a renewed Union cannot be a federation. . . . Ukraine's declaration of independence and a similar decision by Belorussia witness a new historical reality that we cannot escape or ignore.[15]

Within two weeks of Ukraine's decision, all republics except Russia, Turkmenia, and Kazakhstan had declared their independence.

As is often the case in history, it is not the mere fact of the demise of a particular type of political or social arrangement that is so important for understanding a society's development but rather the manner in which that transformation occurs. European colonialism left lasting legacies for former colonies in their economies, political cultures, and social institutions. But the process of decolonization differed from one area to another, even within particular empires. In some instances, decolonization was accompanied by a break with traditional social and political institutions, while in other cases decolonization ended up reinforcing them.

Similarly, although the Soviet imperial legacy will long exercise an impact on post-Soviet economies and societies, the manner in which the final deconstruction of the USSR occurred is of enormous importance as well. The main events of August were played out on the streets of the capital, not in the republics. Independence came to the republics as a result of the collapse

[11]Ibid. Colonel Viktor Alksnis, in an interview with Austrian television in the midst of the coup, noted: "Unfortunately, there will have to be arrests. I personally like the Polish version best, where people were interned for a certain period without a sentence, under good conditions. They have to be isolated so that they cannot destabilize society." See "Colonel Alksnis Predicts Return of Cold War," ORF Television Network (Vienna), trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 21, 1991, p. 18.

[12]For the draft of the treaty, see *Izvestiya* (Moscow), Aug. 15, 1991.

[13]"Russian TV Carries Supreme Soviet Session 22 Aug," trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 22, 1991, p. 65.

[14]*The New York Times*, Aug. 27, 1991.

[15]Ibid. When asked about the uncertain position of Ukraine toward the Union treaty in an interview on the eve of the coup, Sergey Shakhray responded, "What kind of Union could this be without Ukraine?" "Shakhray on New State Structure, Union Treaty," Central Television Program Network (Moscow), trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 19, 1991, p. 50.

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of central authority, not as a result of direct struggle.[16] Yet, the events of August were preceded by three years of mass mobilization, inter-ethnic conflict, and center-republic tensions that not only cleared the path for the center's collapse, but also conditioned the circumstances under which that collapse took place.

The different responses of republic leaders to the coup provide great insight into the mixed motivations involved in various declarations of independence. With the exceptions of Kazakh President Nazarbaev and Kirgiz President Akaev, the governments of Central Asia supported the coup or remained conspicuously silent about Gorbachev's ouster. The governments of Tatarstan, Checheno-Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Buryatia, Tuva, Chuvashia, Bashkiria, Komi, and Mordova either openly embraced emergency rule or refused to condemn it.[17] Belorussian President Mikalay Dzemyantsey supported the coup,[18] as did the leaderships of many minority mass movements within the non-Russian republics. Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk originally wavered in an interview on Soviet television, warning against "hasty judgments,"[19] but this reaction soon gave way to condemnation.[20] In the Baltic states and Moldova, the coup was quickly denounced. The reaction in Armenia and Georgia was negative, but more cautious. Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia even proclaimed neutrality and used the directives of the emergency committee as a cover for disarming paramilitary groups with close ties to his rivals.[21]

In Belorussia, Tajikistan, Checheno-Ingushetia, Tuva, Chuvashia, and Kabardino-Balkaria, pro-coup leaders were removed after the coup. In the case of Checheno-Ingushetia, this was accomplished through an armed overthrow of the government by local nationalists and the looting of party buildings and property. In many cases, power remained in the hands of the communist elites who had supported the coup. As one journalist noted, "the State Emergency Committee has been deposed, but those who supported it remain in power."[22]

A number of the republics that declared independence after the collapse of the coup (in particular, Belorussia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan)—did so to protect the interests of local communist elites. In Belorussia, conservative party *apparatchiki,* who feared that with Yel'tsin in command in Moscow their tenure in office was limited, teamed up with Belorussian nationalists in parliament to pass an independence resolution. Uzbek President Islam Karimov similarly announced that his republic was seeking independence because it feared that the central government had fallen too heavily under Yel'tsin's influence. He subsequently changed the name of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan to the Popular Democratic Party of Uzbekistan, while his government cracked down on opposition *Berlik* politicians and warned a visiting British television crew against introducing "Masonic procedures" into the republic.[23] Perhaps the most bizarre case of *apparatchiki* refitting themselves as nationalists in fear of the liberalism now emanating from Moscow occurred in Azerbaijan. There, at the end of August, Ayaz Mutalibov, first secretary of the Azerbaijani Communist party and president of the republic, suddenly announced that he was "a genuine anticommunist" and had been a "secret Muslim" for years. Mutalibov resigned from his party post, called an emergency republic party congress in September to dissolve the party, nationalized party property (which in essence meant simply transferring the property from his former party organization to his government), and declared his republic independent. He then ran in an uncontested election for president on September 8, which, of course, he won overwhelmingly.[24]

All this is reminiscent of Mexico's ill-fated path to independence in 1820 in the aftermath of a liberal revolution in Spain. Mexican clerics and aristocrats, though representatives of the crown, so feared that the disease of Spanish liberalism might spread to the colony that they rushed to declare independence from their motherland. As a result, Mexico was born in a reaffirmation of feudal institutions—a fact that retarded its development for the rest of the century and was the cause of considerable political instability and violence.[25] The continued dominance of the national *nomenklatura* in

[16]The original emergency declaration proclaimed a state of emergency throughout the entire country, but in order to provide the act with a semblance of legality, this was subsequently corrected by TASS to include only "certain parts of the country." Only the USSR Supreme Soviet had the right to declare a full state of emergency throughout the country. The President (whose post had been assumed by Yanayev) had the right to declare a state of emergency in "individual areas" only. See *Report on the USSR,* Aug. 30, 1991, p. 36. Moscow and the Baltic states bore the brunt of crackdown efforts. Troop movements elsewhere were limited.

[17]*Ekspress-Khronika* (Moscow), Aug. 27, 1991; "Russian TV Carries Supreme Soviet Session 22 Aug," loc. cit., p. 66. The Tatarstan government even suppressed a local demonstration against the State Emergency Committee that took place in Kazan' on August 20.

[18]"TASS Cites Republics' Reactions to Events," TASS, Aug. 21, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV,* Aug. 22, 1991, p. 28.

[19]Moscow Central Television, Aug. 19, 1991.

[20]On the unfolding conflict in the summer of 1991 between Kravchuk and Ukrainian Communist party chief Stanislav Hurenko over the issue of Ukrainian sovereignty, see David Marples, "Radicalization of Political Spectrum in Ukraine," *Report on the USSR,* Aug. 30, 1991, pp. 30–33.

[21]*Ekspress-Khronika,* Aug. 27, 1991.

[22]Ibid.

[23]*The New York Times,* Sept. 1, 9, and 18, 1991.

[24]Ibid., Sept. 4, 1991.

[25]See, for instance, L. Vincent Padgett, *The Mexican Political System,* Boston, MA, Houghton Mifflin, 1976, p. 16.

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some former republics—notably Tajikistan—may be producing much the same outcome. Public pressure forced the resignation of President Kakhar Makhamov for his support of Emergency Committee rule. But within several weeks, the predominantly conservative parliament had forced the resignation of Makhamov's successor for attempting to ban the Communist party and nationalize its property. In his place, it elected former Tajik Communist party boss Rakhman Nabiev. This, in turn, unleashed a massive campaign of protest and civil disobedience in the republic. The multiple paths to independence followed in the republics and the varied ideological colors of the elites who were left in power at the time of the Union's collapse will have an enormous impact on subsequent politics in the area, including the complication of efforts to construct a post-Soviet community.

The Search for New Community

In spite of the collapse of the USSR, a search is taking place among the majority of former republics for some type of post-Soviet community. Indeed, there is a strong rationale for the existence of such a community. But simply because there is such a rationale does not mean that the various interested parties will be able to overcome their considerable differences in order to create viable and lasting relationships.

The case for a post-Soviet community is grounded in deeper structural features of the area: the economic interdependencies built up by the Russian-dominated, multinational empire over several centuries; ethnic populations that flow across borders; and the shared legacy of 70 years of state-socialist development, which has left all the republics impoverished. Former Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze, for one, has predicted that "the center will hold" because the republics will come to recognize that they occupy a "single economic space" and will be drawn toward reconstituting a center in order that that "space" might function effectively.[26]

Yet, the factors that bind also cleave. Three models of a potential post-Soviet community have been pursued to some extent in the aftermath of the coup: consociationalism, economic community, and regionalism. Each, however, is likely to run up against serious problems.

Consociationalism. The idea of turning the USSR into an ethnic confederation (what scholars call consociationalism) has been frequently propounded in recent years. In the past, Gorbachev steadfastly rejected it, at first insisting on a federal arrangement built on the principle of "a strong center and strong republics," and subsequently embracing the idea of an extremely decentralized federalism. But by the time negotiations over the new Union treaty were finished, the final product was essentially confederal. This same Union treaty served as the model for the post-coup governmental reorganization, which is only a temporary formation until a new political system is agreed upon, if that does indeed occur.

According to Arend Lijphart, consociationalism has four defining features: (1) the existence of a grand coalition of political leaders representing the most significant sectors of a pluralistic society; (2) a mutual veto over policy for the leaders of each of these sectors, which serves to protect minority interests; (3) proportional representation as a principle of decision-making —in particular, for staffing governmental offices and in allocating material resources; and (4) a high degree of internal autonomy for each group to run its own affairs. All of these features describe well the post-coup governmental setup.

As Lijphart noted, "to predict whether an unstable democracy can or will become stable by adopting consociational practices is . . . difficult" because successful consociationalism entails "a deliberate change in elite behavior," and elite behavior in general is highly unpredictable.[27] Based on an analysis of past attempts to create consociational arrangements, Lijphart identifies a number of conditions that affect the prospects for the stability of such a system. Taking these conditions into account, one would have to conclude that the prospects for stable consociationalism within the post-Soviet context are indeed quite poor.

Lijphart argues that a consociational arrangement made up of groups of equal or near-equal size is more favorable to stability than an arrangement dominated by a single group, since the latter condition tends to undermine faith in the impartiality of the arrangement on the part of smaller groups or in the justice of the arrangement on the part of the dominant group. The numerical dominance of Russians within any post-Soviet community is likely to inject a certain degree of mistrust into the arrangements, particularly in view of past history. Already, accusations that the Yel'tsin government represents a rebirth of "Great Russian chauvinism" have been propounded by minorities dissatisfied with the thrust of Russian policy.[28]

Second, Lijphart argues that the existence of a mod-

[26]Associated Press, Sept. 21, 1991.

[27]Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1977, p. 54.

[28]*Ekspress-Khronika*, Sept. 3, 1991; *The New York Times*, Sept. 8, 1991.

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Russian President Boris Yel'tsin, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev during the September 3, 1991, special session of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies.

—AP/Wide World.

erate number of political parties, each representing the major segments of society, makes the arrangement more manageable. Most of the former Soviet republics are plagued with an overabundance of weak political parties—a characteristic of post-Leninist politics in general.[29] This weakness of party systems, as well as the large number of parties representing ethnic interests, would tend to fragment the political system. There is also the issue of whether all relevant segments of society are represented in current institutional arrangements. Even before the coup, Boris Yel'tsin warned that separate republic representation for the 6 million Volga Tatars of the RSFSR could "ignite an inter-ethnic conflict",[30] he has dispatched emissaries throughout Russia to ensure implementation of his decrees. By contrast, a significant number of Tatars have supported independence from the RSFSR.

A country's size also influences the prospects for a successful consociational arrangement. Lijphart argues that a small country is more likely to be characterized by a spirit of cooperation among elites, and that the intricacy of decision-making within large countries makes elite accord problematic. Yet, even more than size, the great complexity of the challenges facing post-Soviet governments—i.e., to create market economies, privatize, reindustrialize, alleviate consumer shortages, etc.—is not conducive to elite cooperation. (This generalization holds as well for ethnically homogenous states, such as Poland or Hungary.) No overarching political loyalties to a common Soviet identity exist among former Soviet peoples. Significant ideological cleavages divide republic leaders; new political elites have come to power in some parts of the country, while old communist elites continue to dominate elsewhere. Enormous distrust exists between these groups, and it is doubtful that they could be easily integrated into a single political unit.[31]

Finally, a key condition for the success of any consociational arrangement is the relative isolation of groups from one another. Soviet nations do not live in segmental isolation. On the eve of the coup, approximately 65 million Soviet citizens lived outside their titular national territory, or were members of an ethnic group that had no territorial unit. Approximately 25 million Russians live outside the Russian republic. The Russian diaspora presents one of the most serious challenges to any ethnic confederation in the post-Soviet lands. Yel'tsin's

[29]On the weakness of the Hungarian party system, see Judith Pataki, "Popularity of Major Political Parties Decreases," Radio Free Europe, *Report on Eastern Europe* (Munich), Aug. 2, 1991, pp. 5–10.

[30]"Report on Russian-Kazakh Agreements," Interfax (Moscow), Aug. 17, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 19, 1991, p. 51; Alexander Rahr, "El'tsin Sets Up New System for Governing Russia," *Report on the USSR*, Aug. 23, 1991, p. 11.

[31]Take, for instance, Yevgeniy Ambartsumov's comments at the emergency RSFSR Supreme Soviet session on August 22, when he noted that "the signing of the Union treaty should be revised since people like Mutalibov cannot be trusted; they are rabid partocrats." "Russian TV Carries Supreme Soviet Session 22 Aug," loc. cit., p. 65.

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warning that the borders of Ukraine and Kazakhstan might have to be adjusted if the Union totally disintegrates brought a sharp response from the leaders of both republics, who replied that such attitudes threatened to plunge the country into civil war.[32] The Russian diaspora presents Yel'tsin with the choice of acting as president either of Russia or of Russians—a decision that is likely to have a very profound effect on the prospects for peace in the region.[33]

Gorbachev has estimated that it may take as long as 10 to 15 years to negotiate a permanent confederal arrangement, and a minimum of two to three years before such changes could even begin to be implemented.[34] Given the enormous problems such a community would face, one cannot but wonder how long such an arrangement would last, if it were to come into existence.

An economic community. The most obvious alternative to consociationalism is some form of economic community. Indeed, it may turn out that the most significant change in institutions that took place after the coup was the creation of an Interrepublic Economic Committee, whose purpose is to coordinate economic relations among the former republics. Membership in a renewed USSR is not a precondition for participation in the economic committee. The committee is attempting to function as an embryonic community for *all* the former republics. A number of republic leaders—including Armenian President Ter-Petrosian, Kirgiz President Akaev, and Ukrainian President Kravchuk—have publicly advocated such an arrangement. A draft treaty for a Eurasian Economic Community, which was drawn up by First Deputy Chairman of the Interrepublic Economic Committee Grigoriy Yavlinskiy and presented to the republics on September 11, envisioned a common currency and banking system, open trade between republics, free migration of labor, and coordinated tax policies. Each republic would be allowed to issue its own internal currency, but would be required to use rubles when engaging in interrepublic trade.[35] A further step toward the creation of an economic community was taken on September 16, when members of the State Council agreed on the need to coordinate food aid this coming winter. In early October, representatives of 13 former Soviet republics met in Alma-Ata to discuss further details of an economic community. At that time, 12 former republics initialed a draft agreement. Ten of these were scheduled to sign an economic treaty by mid-October, though there was some uncertainty that all would sign. The agreement would then be subject to ratification by the republic parliaments before taking effect.

Some economic coordination between the former republics of the USSR would appear necessary, given their high level of economic interdependence. That interdependence is further reinforced by the high level of monopolization in the economy and the absence of markets.[36] But as studies of economic integration elsewhere in the world suggest, the establishment of a successful economic community requires more than interdependence and mutual self-interest.

One significant factor will undoubtedly be the policies of the international community. The fact that a number of Western states, including the US, have decided that it is in their interests to channel aid through a single center rather than through multiple points will be yet another powerful incentive for establishing some kind of economic center. The existence of a single economic center may actually become a precondition for large amounts of aid. Another factor conducive to a post-Soviet economic community is the existence of a technocratic lobby of planners and managers who favor such a development. Leon Lindberg and Stuart Scheingold argued that the European Community was "primarily a creature of elites"—specifically, "those officials and interest group leaders" who were "directly affected by its work."[37] Indeed, as a gathering of economic managers in Armenia on the eve of the coup indicated, republic leaders are under strong pressure from local managers to create an economic community in order to cope with the disorganization that has resulted from the breakdown of interrepublic economic ties.[38]

But a number of factors threaten the stability of a post-Soviet economic community. Lindberg and Scheingold observed that it was "certain very special features characterizing postwar Europe" that account

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[32]Associated Press, Aug. 28, 1991.

[33]In the forefront of those who have been urging Yel'tsin to defend more vigorously the interests of Russians living outside RSFSR borders has been Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov, himself a Greek.

[34]*The New York Times*, Sept. 19, 1991.

[35]Associated Press, Sept. 16, 1991; *The New York Times*, Sept. 17, 1991. Yavlinskiy has warned that if steps are not taken to create an economic community by November, serious economic disaster could descend upon the former republics.

[36]Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye observe that vulnerability—the key dimension of interdependence—rests on "the relative availability and costliness of the alternatives that various actors face." Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, Boston, MA, Little, Brown, and Company, 1977, p. 13. A high degree of monopoly in the economy and an absence of markets sharply reduce economic alternatives in all former republics, thereby heightening their interdependence.

[37]Leon N. Lindberg and Stuart A. Scheingold, *Europe's Would-Be Polity: Patterns of Change in the European Community*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1970, p. 41.

[38]"Enterprises Urge No Break With Union," Interfax, Aug. 17, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 21, 1991, p. 87.

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for the success of the European Community—in particular, "the enhanced role of technocratic elites and their considerable freedom from parliamentary control."[39] Ernst Haas similarly argued that one of the factors lying behind the success of European economic integration was the fact that decision-making was carried out by civil servants and technocrats rather than by politicians.[40] The highly politicized atmosphere of post-Soviet politics, in which nationalist passions predominate and bureaucrats are under fire, is hardly an environment that would allow technocratic integrationists to bypass politicians and the public in order to accomplish what Joseph Nye labeled "integration by stealth."[41] Economic integration has generally required popular demobilization, lack of controversy, and trust in government—none of which are particularly abundant in the post-Soviet era. In mid-September, when Ukrainian President Kravchuk presented the idea of an economic union to the Ukrainian parliament, he was sharply rebuffed by that body, which viewed the plan as potentially detrimental to Ukrainian sovereignty.[42] Even within the Yel'tsin government, opinions have been sharply divided over an economic community. Though Yavlinskiy has assured Russian legislators that Russia would always dominate any economic arrangement because of its size and resources, Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy has argued that an economic treaty might drain resources away from Russia and State Secretary Gennadiy Burbulis has raised objections that an economic community might end up subjecting the republics once more to the diktat of the center. Uzbek officials have expressed similar fears about the dangers of interference in local affairs by a reconstituted central bureaucracy.

A second factor that bodes poorly for economic integration is the nonmarket character of all republic economies. The past two years have shown that under conditions of republic sovereignty and the absence of markets, interrepublic economic interactions are reduced to cumbersome barter agreements, requiring tough negotiations over prices and exchange equivalencies. Many of the agreements that were reached went unfulfilled. Thoroughgoing market reform is a precondition for the successful functioning of a post-Soviet economic community.

Yet, paradoxically, the processes of marketization and privatization could very well undermine the consensus on which economic community would be built. Marketization and privatization are only in their beginning stages in all the former republics, are likely to be implemented to varying degrees in different places, and undoubtedly will give rise to strong pressures to limit the full force of their impact. It is difficult to imagine that consensus over financial, fiscal, trade, and migration policies could be sustained for very long under these conditions. Economic reform will be accompanied by growing inequalities among former republics, giving rise to pressures for protectionism. Finally, the rationale for many economic interactions between the former republics is simply the inertia of decisions from the past. As marketization proceeds, long-standing interrepublic relationships will be disrupted, causing considerable conflict over the dislocation and unemployment that will result. All this leads one to believe that any post-Soviet economic community will live a stormy existence.

Regionalism. A final form that the search for post-Soviet community has assumed is regionalism. This involves the creation of smaller communities among subsets of former republics, possibly in combination with outside states.

The advantages of regionalism within the post-Soviet context are several. Regionalism reduces the complexity involved in managing a community by reducing the number of participants. In some cases, it could also provide a cultural cohesion to transnational organization that, with a larger number of participants, would otherwise be lacking.

Movement toward regionalism was already apparent in Soviet politics well before the coup. Two areas in particular have experienced significant regional cooperation: the Baltics and Central Asia. Since early 1990, the Baltic states have held joint sessions of their respective parliaments and have coordinated economic policies. There is a long history of cooperation in the Baltic region dating back to the 1934 Treaty on Unity and Cooperation, which the three republics vowed to renew at a meeting in Tallinn in May 1990.[43] Some sentiment also exists for integrating the Baltic states into a transnational Scandinavian community. Indeed, on the eve of the coup, negotiations were being held over the creation of a Baltic Council that would include not only the Baltic states, but Poland, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the RSFSR as well.[44]

Since 1990, the Central Asian republics have engaged in efforts to create a regional organization. In

[39]Lindberg and Scheingold, op. cit., p. 23.

[40]Ernst B. Haas, "Technocracy, Pluralism, and the New Europe," in Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Ed., *International Regionalism: Readings*, Boston, MA, Little, Brown, and Company, 1968, p. 152.

[41]Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Peace in Parts: Integration and Conflict in Regional Organization*, Boston, MA, Little, Brown, and Company, 1971, p. 60.

[42]*The New York Times*, Sept. 18, 1991.

[43]See Saulius Girnius, "United Baltic Front for Independence," *Report on the USSR*, May 25, 1990, pp. 15–16.

[44]*Report on the USSR*, Sept. 6, 1991, p. 91.

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that year, a regional cooperation agreement was signed in Alma-Ata that envisioned broad-based economic cooperation. Only days before the coup, the five Central Asian presidents met in Tashkent and established a permanent commission to coordinate implementation of the cooperation agreement. Azerbaijan has also expressed interest in joining the group, and a fall meeting is planned in Ashkhabad for working out a common strategy for marketization.[45] All this has led some observers to speak of the emergence of a "greater Turkestan."[46]

Regionalism is unlikely to be a workable arrangement for all former republics. Nationalist passions make regional cooperation in the Transcaucasus unfeasible, much as they did in 1918. They may also eventually undermine efforts to establish regional coordination in Central Asia. There has been no shortage of pan-Turkic projects in the past—they have usually foundered on the rocks of inter-ethnic rivalries. Ironically, while Central Asian elites have moved in the direction of cooperation, at the mass level, nationalist violence among Central Asian nations has been some of the most intense in the entire USSR. Ideological differences among Central Asian leaderships—particularly between the liberal leaderships of Kazakhstan and Kirgizia and the more conservative elites of Uzbekistan, Turkmenia, and Tajikistan—will also be a problem in trying to coordinate policies.[47]

Moreover, many of the same obstacles that are likely to plague efforts to construct all-Union communities will remain obstacles for efforts to construct communities among subsets of republics. As Inis Claude noted, "the advocacy of regionalism can be, and often is, as doctrinaire and as heedless of concrete realities as the passion for all-encompassing organization."[48] For all these reasons, one can expect that the impact of regionalism will be limited.

The Consequences of Elusive Community

Having deconstructed the Soviet Union, the peoples of the former Soviet empire have neither the desire nor the possibility of resurrecting it. There are, to be sure, strong reasons for forging new communities in order to deal with common interdependencies. In the absence of community, economic reform will be even more difficult than it already is expected to be for all of the former republics; the existing economic infrastructure will greatly deteriorate; and inter-ethnic conflict and rival territorial claims will more easily turn into interstate warfare. Yet, as I have argued, if we judge on the basis of those conditions that political scientists generally cite as necessary for workable transnational arrangements, the achievement of a viable post-Soviet community is, for a variety of reasons, likely to remain elusive in the long run.

Within the post-Soviet context, consociationalism, or ethnic confederation, would probably not be an enduring arrangement. A post-Soviet economic community would be plagued by considerably greater conflicts than those that afflict the EC, because of intense nationalisms and the many problems that will arise from marketization. Regionalism will be a relevant solution for some former republics; but even in these cases, regionalism may stumble, as it has in the past, on inter-ethnic conflicts and ideological differences. Although limiting the scope and goals of community may increase the likelihood of success, one can imagine that even a minimalist form of international organization among the former republics (for instance, along the model of the Organization of African Unity, regulating conflicts that flow over borders and guaranteeing the sanctity of existing boundaries) would be able to function only if a certain denationalization of political units takes place. Even then, the track record of such organizations in containing the spread of civil violence is not good.[49] Of course, the need for community within former republics is even more pressing than it is for community between former republics. Every former republic is plagued with serious internal and inter-ethnic problems that will require extraordinary efforts of conflict resolution and institution-building to prevent them from becoming sources of communal violence. Politics within some former republics will remain highly unstable, characterized by sharp conflicts along both national and ideological lines.

This does not mean that post-Soviet communities will not be brought into existence by elites responding to the interdependencies that do exist. Rather, it means that the prospects for the successful functioning of such communities are poor, ensuring that the post-Soviet era in politics will indeed be a turbulent one.

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[45] *Izvestiya*, Aug. 15, 1991; *Report on the USSR*, Aug. 23, 1991, pp. 31–32.

[46] *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (Moscow), July 27, 1991.

[47] At a press conference following the Tashkent meeting, Turkmen journalists pummelled Kirgiz President Akaev with questions about his liberal policies, including the dropping of the words "Soviet" and "socialist" from the republic's name. Ibid.

[48] Inis Claude, *Swords Into Plowshares: The Problems and Progress of International Organization*, New York, Random House, 1964, p. 95.

[49] See Linda B. Miller, "Regional Organization and the Regulation of Internal Conflict," in Nye, Jr., Ed., op. cit., pp. 77–96.

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The Coup That Never Was: Gorbachev and the Forces of Reaction

Amy Knight

ALTHOUGH the failed attempt by reactionary forces in the Soviet Union to bypass President Mikhail Gorbachev and institute a state of emergency in August of this year came as a shock to the outside world, few close observers of Soviet politics were surprised by the fact that the alleged ringleaders were the heads of the KGB, the MVD (the regular police), and the military. All had expressed their alarm about the economic and political chaos that had ensued as a result of Gorbachev's policy of *perestroyka,* and all had made it clear that they would do their utmost to restore order and preserve the Union. KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov had been especially outspoken about the need to put the brakes on reform. In June 1991, he delivered an impassioned speech to a closed session of the USSR Supreme Soviet in which he decried attempts by the West to interfere in Soviet affairs and claimed that in exchange for promised Western economic aid, the Soviet Union was offering itself up to subversion by the CIA. At that time, Kryuchkov, Minister of Defense Dmitriy Yazov, and MVD chief Boris Pugo supported a bid, which proved unsuccessful, by Chairman of the Council of Ministers Valentin Pavlov to transfer some of Gorbachev's powers to the Council of Ministers.

After this episode, it is unlikely that Gorbachev was truly surprised by who was among the group of alleged conspirators or indeed by their efforts to institute a state of emergency in August. He was well aware of the views of all these men and most surely expected a further challenge from them after the events of June. Some Soviet observers have even gone so far as to suggest that Gorbachev encouraged them to express their opposition in June in order to demonstrate both to Western leaders (on the eve of the July G-7 meetings in London) and to leaders of the republics that he was under extreme pressure from the Right.[1]

Why Gorbachev, an astute politician and a proven master of tactical survival in the most difficult political circumstances, ended up under house arrest on August 18 was just one of the many curious aspects of the failed coup. Even more puzzling was why the alleged conspirators bungled their plans so badly, neglecting to take even the most elementary steps to consolidate their coup. Not only did they delay ordering tanks into Moscow for several hours after announcing the state of emergency but they also failed to arrest Boris Yel'tsin, who, quite predictably, became the rallying point of opposition to their emergency committee. And they never bothered to cut off key lines of communication or to muzzle the foreign media.

History's Lessons

These questions may never be answered conclusively, and, with the coup leaders safely locked up, communism now officially declared dead, and Gorbachev back at the helm as leader of a new transitional confederation of independent republics, they might

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[1]See a commentary by Vladimir Kuznechevskiy in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* (Moscow), June 26, 1991, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-SOV*), June 26, 1991, pp. 31–33.

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seem irrelevant. Many would argue that the most important thing about the aborted coup is that the reactionary forces can no longer impede reform. Their defeat has paved the way for the long-awaited transformation of the Soviet Union into a democracy. All that remains is to inflict retribution on the criminals and to desecrate completely the symbols of their tyranny.

This has been the standard approach to past coups and leadership shakeups in the Soviet Union. Soviet people are accustomed to sudden denunciations of certain leaders and policies and the ensuing ritual of renaming places and tearing down statues. They are used to official silence on how these men came to power and their past alliances with the leaders who remain. When Khrushchev and his colleagues in June 1953 announced that Lavrentiy Beria had been arrested for being a traitor and later, in 1956, denounced Stalin for crimes against the people, they were not required to explain their long years of close association with these evildoers. Similarly, no such explanation was expected when Khrushchev was ousted, or when Brezhnev was posthumously attacked for creating a regime of corruption and stagnation. In this respect, the August upheaval is being playing out in a similar way. Gorbachev has made a few apologetic remarks about his bad judgment in surrounding himself with untrustworthy men, but has successfully deflected deeper questions about how this whole affair came about.

Soviet history has witnessed several instances of dramatic and potentially violent upheavals in the Kremlin, in part, because the Soviet system has lacked a prescribed means for transferring power at the top. Traditionally, leaders have been chosen by a small conclave of Communist officials and presented to the party and the country as a *fait accompli*. Gorbachev was selected in March 1985 to be party, and hence Soviet, leader in this very manner. It was not until March 1990, when the new, more powerful post of president of the USSR was created that Gorbachev actually faced any kind of an election. Because he ran unopposed and was elected by a body, the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, that in itself was not representative (one-third of its members had been delegated from public organizations, including the Communist party), many considered the election to be a sham.

Although President Gorbachev's position was generally more secure than that of earlier Soviet leaders, he did not have the legitimacy normally accorded to an elected leader in a democratic country, and this made him vulnerable to attempts to usurp his power. Soviet history also gave him little reason to be complacent about Soviet institutions of coercion—the military and the police. In the past, these institutions have played key roles in leadership struggles, having been called upon by party leaders to support their efforts. Thus, when Khrushchev and his colleagues ousted Beria, who was at the time chief of both the security and the regular police, they relied on the Soviet military to carry out his arrest and display a show of force in Moscow. They also managed to form an alliance with some leading police officials—in particular, Nikolay Kruglov, first deputy chairman of the MVD, and Ivan Serov, a deputy chairman—whose support was essential to the success of their plot. Similarly, when Khrushchev was ousted, the other members of the Presidium enlisted KGB Chairman Vladimir Semichastnyy, who met Khrushchev at the airport upon his return from his vacation retreat and escorted him to the Presidium meeting where he was told of his ouster. Although the role of the Soviet military was less visible in this instance, key generals, such as Minister of Defense Roman Malinovskiy, had been brought in on the plot.[2]

The affair of August 18–21 was different in two crucial respects, however. In both earlier cases, surprise had been an essential element of the success of the plotters. Because they were able to keep their plans completely secret, no attempts were made to thwart them until it was too late. Had Beria realized in June 1953 that Khrushchev was planning to get rid of him, he surely would have called upon his vast network of allies in the police, who included the heads of troop divisions, to resist his opponents. Similarly, Khrushchev, in October 1964, might have tried to avert the coup by appealing to his supporters within the party, as he did in 1957, when the so-called "anti-party group" tried to depose him. But *glasnost'* had changed the political environment under Gorbachev to the point where those who opposed his policies, including representatives from the police and military, openly expressed this opposition and even tried to take away some of Gorbachev's power.[3] Gorbachev was in a better position to gauge where he stood with both the Right and Left and assess the extent of dissatisfaction with his policies.

Another key difference was the fact that since the party no longer played the leading political role, Gorbachev had little to fear from a party-led coup. Gorbachev had slowly emasculated the party machine, transferring power to the state apparatus. Previously, controls over the police and the military had rested in the hands of a Politburo secretary who approved key appoint-

[2]For a discussion of recent Soviet accounts of the coup, see Werner Hahn, "Who Ousted Nikita Sergeyevich?" *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), May-June 1991, pp. 109–15.

[3]Kryuchkov, for example, had begun criticizing *perestroyka* with vehemence back in the autumn of 1990. See a television statement he made, which was reprinted in *Krasnaya Zvezda* (Moscow), Dec. 12, 1990.

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Former chiefs of the Soviet internal-security agencies: from left to right, defense minister Dmitriy Yazov, KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov, and interior minister Boris Pugo.

—Reuters/Bettmann.

ments and issued policy directives on behalf of the party. Gorbachev, however, acquired direct authority over these bodies, exercised through a Security Council (created in November 1990) and a special Law Enforcement Committee (created in May 1991), which were both responsible directly to him. Thus, although party bureaucrats were still clinging to the last vestiges of their power, the real controls were in the hands of Gorbachev and his immediate entourage.

Gorbachev and the Right Wing

By early 1991, Gorbachev's entourage had become increasingly dominated by hard-liners—several of whom represented the interests of the the KGB, and all of whom had been hand-picked by Gorbachev. Kryuchkov had been in the KGB over 20 years when Gorbachev appointed him chairman in October 1988, disappointing those who had hoped Gorbachev would bring in an outsider. Since Kryuchkov had previously headed the KGB's foreign intelligence-gathering network—in this capacity he accompanied Gorbachev on his first trip to the United States in late 1988—he was not associated directly with the organs of internal repression. The KGB's adept public relations office was quick to play up this fact, and soon Western observers were mistakenly labeling Kryuchkov a reformer who wanted to use the KGB for intelligence-gathering purposes rather than internal political control. Kryuchkov proceeded to pack the upper levels of the KGB with his associates from the First Chief Directorate, and apparently Gorbachev made no effort to interfere.

Boris Pugo, who took over the MVD in December 1990, was also a member of this entourage. He had served for several years in the KGB in his native republic, Latvia. Vice-President Gennadiy Yanayev, who designated himself as Gorbachev's surrogate on August 19, was yet another close Gorbachev adviser. Yanayev earned a law degree (a virtual prerequisite for an upper-level KGB job) in the midst of his career in agriculture and later served for several years as a leading official in two organizations that were widely recognized as KGB fronts: The Committee of Youth Organizations of the USSR and the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. Gorbachev had vigorously pushed for Yanayev's appointment as vice-president in December 1990. Although Yanayev was the only candidate put forward for the post, he was initially rejected by the Congress of People's Deputies and only squeezed through on a second round of voting, which took place after Gorbachev did some intense lobbying on his behalf. When

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one deputy suggested that Gorbachev at the very least give them a choice by offering more than one nominee for this very important post, Gorbachev retorted impatiently that such demands were improper and that the vice-president should be someone named and picked by the president. Dismissing the concerns expressed by some deputies that Yanayev was not a good candidate for furthering reform, Gorbachev asserted: "I want to have a person whom I trust completely at my side at this most difficult turning point in life."[4]

Although Gorbachev had alienated communist bureaucrats by weakening the party and antagonized the Soviet military by his arms control agreements and cuts in defense spending, he was careful not to trample on the vested interests of the KGB. Once he became President of the USSR in March 1990, Gorbachev issued decree after decree strengthening the powers of the KGB to maintain, with the help of the MVD, order and stability in the increasingly chaotic political and social environment. He augmented the forces of both the KGB Border Guard and Special Troops and authorized the KGB and MVD to seize illegal weapons from all militant groups in the country.

In November 1990, at Gorbachev's insistence, the USSR Supreme Soviet charged the KGB with a new mission—combatting "economic sabotage." As part of this new assignment, the KGB was to oversee the distribution of all imported goods and foodstuffs. A decree of February 4, 1991, unleashed the KGB against would-be entrepreneurs by giving it unprecedented powers to seize business documents and bank statements and to search the premises of private enterprises for evidence of sabotage.

Gorbachev was outspoken in his support of the new Law on the KGB, finally approved by the Supreme Soviet in May 1991, despite the fact that it gave the KGB sweeping new powers and consequently was viewed by reformers as a grave threat to democracy. He seemed to allow the KGB free rein to crack down, with the help of the MVD and the Soviet military, on recalcitrant nationalists. Having disclaimed any responsibility for the bloody attacks on the democratic governments of Lithuania and Latvia in January 1991, he showed little interest in establishing who was behind these attacks. His reaction was similar when new violence was precipitated in the Baltic republics in June and July 1991.

Gorbachev's hard-line colleagues were obviously putting increased pressure on him to halt reform, but he demonstrated little resolve in resisting their efforts. Indeed, he continued to display his usual ambivalence, "straddling the fence" in order to stay in power. With the Union treaty about to be signed and Boris Yel'tsin becoming politically stronger day by day, these men may well have had good reason to expect that Gorbachev would go along with their proposal to institute a state of emergency in the country. It was Gorbachev who, after managing to have himself elected president by the Congress of People's Deputies in March 1990, pushed through the new Law on the State of Emergency, thereby creating a constitutional basis for invoking extraordinary centralized powers. As former Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, one of the alleged plotters, said later: "extraordinary and emergency measures had been discussed before, in the spring, for instance. The question of applying emergency measures to stabilize the situation came up all the time after all. So there was nothing new about that."[5] According to another former minister, for example, an emergency meeting of the USSR Council of Ministers had been called on March 27, the day before the opening of the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies, to consider the possibility of declaring a state of emergency. Instead, troops were brought into the capital as a show of force to intimidate the large crowds taking part in rallies.[6]

It is highly probable, then, that Gorbachev led his colleagues to believe that he would go along with a declaration of a state of emergency. Yet, once things had been set into motion, he withdrew his support, forcing them to proceed without his official sanction. This scenario would explain the last-minute trip to Gorbachev's dacha on Sunday, August 18, by four emissaries of the hard-line leaders, Oleg Shenin, Valeriy Bol'din, Oleg Baklanov, and General Valentin Varennikov, accompanied by the head of the KGB's Government Protection Service, Sergey Plekhanov. Their purpose could well have been to dissuade Gorbachev from bailing out at the 11th hour. And it would account for the sudden, urgent meeting called that night by Kryuchkov, Pugo, and Yazov and attended by Pavlov, Anatoliy Luk'yanov, and others, to work out a strategy to proceed without Gorbachev. If they had assumed that Gorbachev would announce a state of emergency and present it to a hastily convened Supreme Soviet for ratification, they would not have had plans to create an emergency committee or to display the all-out show of force that a coup would require. Far-fetched as it may seem, it is even possible, as was claimed by some of the accused conspirators, that Gorbachev actually feigned illness in order to have an excuse for backing out.[7]

Pavlov's account of the coup, though doubtless self-

[4]Moscow Radio, Dec. 26, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV*, Dec. 27, 1990, pp. 12–13.
[5]Moscow Television, Aug. 24, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 26, 1991, p. 31.
[6]Interview with former USSR Minister of Environmental Protection N. Votontsov, *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 4, 1991, p. 51.
[7](Fn. 7 follows on p. 40.)

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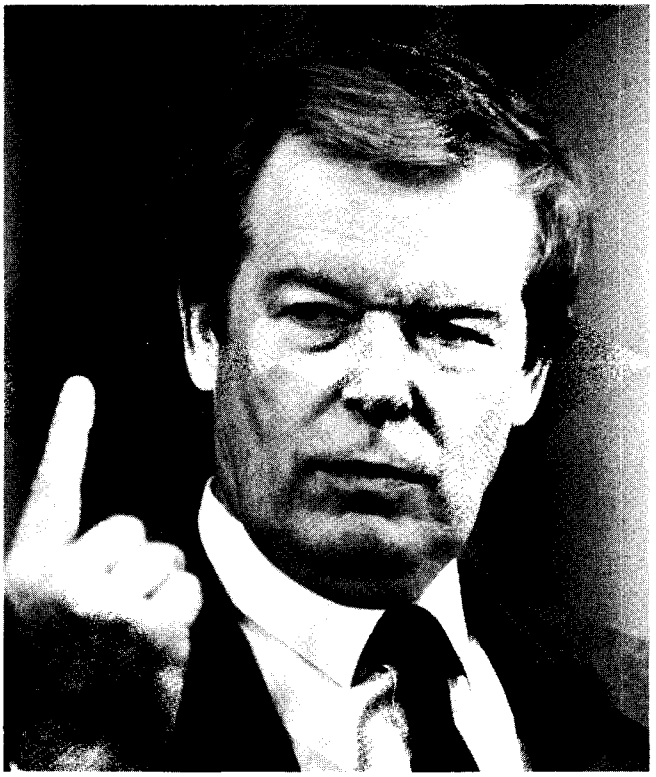
serving, lends weight to the hypothesis that Gorbachev went along with the idea of a state of emergency until the very end. Pavlov noted that the composition of the Emergency Committee had not even been discussed beforehand and thus had to quickly be decided upon. And he went on to add: "I didn't think things would work out this way. If someone hadn't foolishly decided to bring tanks into the city, then nothing would have happened." With the plans of the hard-liners in disarray, things began to fall apart quickly. People who might have been counted upon to support a state of emergency, including key military commanders, realized that the Emergency Committee would not succeed in imposing a state of emergency and either refused to go along with it or decided to lay low until they could see how events unfolded. In many cases, orders to bring in troops were never given or were so vague and belated that they were never acted upon. This seems to have been what occurred with the KGB's infamous "Alpha" subunit, an elite force of stormtroopers that had been used in the Baltic states. Although its men have subsequently portrayed themselves as heroes for refusing to storm the Russian Parliament, their commander, Viktor Karpukhin, stated explicitly that he had never received orders to attack.[8] What actually took place, then, was not really a coup but a feeble attempt by Gorbachev's colleagues to invoke an emergency law without his official sanction.

Alternatively, Gorbachev might have intended all along to back out and cooperated just long enough to expose some troublesome hard-liners and emerge as a courageous defender of reform. This was, of course, a dangerous gamble, but this was nothing new for him. Time and again, he had placed himself in crisis situations, maintaining a precarious balance between the Right and Left and emerging with his position intact. On this occasion, of course, he ended up ceding much of his power to Boris Yel'tsin. But a power-sharing arrangement with Yel'tsin had become inevitable well before the events of August 18–21.

[7]The question of Gorbachev's health at the time of the coup is murky. It was subsequently revealed by one of Gorbachev's physicians that he had been flown down to Foros at Gorbachev's request and on August 18 had carried out a long operation on Gorbachev to relieve back pain. Gorbachev was injected with several medications and even lost consciousness for a short while. See Aleksey Adzhubey, "I Could Have Accidentally Killed the President," *Izvestiya* (Moscow), Sept. 3, 1991. Gorbachev himself alluded to a medical certificate stating that he was ill, but he said that physicians had been forced to sign this by the coup-plotters. See his address to the Supreme Soviet on August 27, 1991, reprinted in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 28, 1991, p. 13.

[8]*Komsomol'skaya Pravda* (Moscow), Aug. 24, 1991. Karpukhin later changed his story and said that he had been ordered to mount some sort of attack. See an interview with him by *Asahi Evening News* (Tokyo), Sept. 13, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 16, 1991, p. 2.



Vadim Bakatin, newly appointed chairman of the USSR KGB, speaking at a press conference on August 30, 1991.

—N. Malyshev/TASS from Sovfoto.

The Post-Coup Security Apparatus

Gorbachev's actions immediately upon his return to Moscow lend credence to the suggestion that his political sympathies were not entirely in the reformist camp. While denouncing the vanquished plotters, he appointed their immediate deputies to replace them. This apparently did not go over well with the Yel'tsin camp, and a swift changeover was effected the next day. The new chiefs of the KGB, MVD, and Ministry of Defense—Vadim Bakatin, Viktor Barannikov, and Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov respectively—were men who had seen fit to dissociate themselves from the plotters at the outset. Bakatin, who had served as head of the MVD from October 1988 to December 1990, is not a KGB professional and gained a reputation as a reformer when he reportedly opposed using force in the Baltic states.[9] Although Bakatin ran against Yel'tsin for the post of

[9]Nonetheless, it was during Bakatin's tenure in the MVD that the ministry became more closely associated with the KGB. Bakatin worked in concert with Kryuchkov and other KGB officials for over two years, so he can hardly be considered an impartial outsider.

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president of the RSFSR, he appears to be firmly in the Yel'tsin camp.

For all his reformist credentials, Yel'tsin is not immune to the temptation of buttressing his authority by gaining a foothold in the KGB. In May 1991, Yel'tsin and Kryuchkov signed an agreement establishing an RSFSR KGB, headed by a career USSR KGB official named Viktor Ivanenko. The other republics have always had state security committees subordinate to the center, but the KGB in the Russian republic had been administered at the oblast level and below, bypassing a republic-level hierarchy. According to the agreement, the RSFSR KGB was to be, like the organizations in other republics, subordinate to the USSR KGB, with its staff and funding coming directly from the center. Yel'tsin apparently considered the creation of an RSFSR KGB an expedient move that would give his republic a greater share in the spoils of the USSR KGB when the USSR government is eventually dismantled. Kryuchkov saw the agreement differently, citing the importance of preserving the "indivisibility of the security of the Union and the individual republics."[10] Now, of course, Kryuchkov's views are irrelevant, and Yel'tsin is in a strong position to exert his influence over the RSFSR KGB with little objection from the central KGB apparatus, which was greatly weakened by the alleged coup attempt. Indeed, Yel'tsin has been talking about getting rid of the USSR KGB and transferring the bulk of its apparatus to the RSFSR KGB.

Although the military has also been discredited, the USSR KGB has been singled out as the main culprit in the conspiracy and has borne the brunt of the post-coup purges. Of the 15 men now under arrest, five, including Kryuchkov, are high-ranking KGB officials (as compared with two, Yazov and former commander of the ground forces Valentin Varennikov, from the military). A major theme in the public utterances of politicians who emerged unscathed, or in Yel'tsin's case victorious, from the August crisis has been the necessity for a reform of the KGB. Those who are old enough to remember the aftermath of Beria's defeat may well have a sense of déjà vu. The vows that the security police force will be stripped of its awesome powers and the claims that it is being purged of all disloyal and untrustworthy elements are familiar.

Yet, there is a clear sense of ambivalence about such reforms on the part of the post-coup central leadership. It was announced, for example, that three KGB divisions, "chopped off" from the Soviet Army last year by Kryuchkov, are to return to the regular military. But KGB forces responsible for guarding the president (from the Ninth Directorate) will be removed from KGB jurisdiction and placed directly under Gorbachev, as will the 500-man Alpha subunit. And the fate of the remaining 40,000 KGB special troops and the 220,000 border guards has yet to be determined. Gorbachev and Bakatin have promised that the new Law on the KGB (which Gorbachev had so strongly defended) will be revoked, and they have announced plans to separate the foreign intelligence directorate (the First Chief Directorate)[11] from the KGB and make it an independent agency. But they continue to insist that the central KGB apparatus must remain and even have alluded to the possibility of merging the MVD and the KGB, which would create a vast police organization. Although leading KGB officials are being dismissed and new blood introduced, this appears to be a slow process. Gennadiy Titov, head of the counterintelligence directorate and a deputy chairman of the USSR KGB, emerged as a chief KGB spokesman after the coup, despite the fact that he had been for many years a protégé of Kryuchkov's in the foreign intelligence directorate. Bakatin actually asserted that Titov was exempt from dismissal because he was out of town during the alleged coup, but a month later he did in fact tender his resignation. Aleksey Karbainov, the ubiquitous chief of the KGB press center, whose task for the past several years has been to present the KGB in the best possible light with the public has fared somewhat better and is still holding down his job at the Lubyanka. He, too, was not around during the coup. One suspects that there are many others like them who have managed to survive the shakeup.

As part of the new campaign to reform the KGB, Gorbachev and Yel'tsin have created a new state commission for investigating its activities. The commission, headed by RSFSR parliamentarian Sergey Stepashin, is charged with drawing up yet another law on the KGB. And, in typical Soviet fashion, two of its ten deputies are career KGB officials: the newly appointed first deputy chairman of the KGB, Anatoliy Oleynikov, and RSFSR KGB chief Ivanenko. Since the commission is also investigating the role of the KGB in the events of August 18–21, Ivanenko and Oleynikov will be in the anomalous position of investigating their former comrades.

A Law-Governed State?

The whole approach to the investigation of the alleged coup plotters illustrates the ad hoc nature of the Soviet legal system and the problems inherent in mak-

[10]TASS, May 6, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, May 7, 1991, p. 39.

[11]The new chief of the KGB's foreign intelligence apparatus is Yevgeniy Primakov, a close Gorbachev associate who for many years was an international affairs specialist with close links to the KGB.

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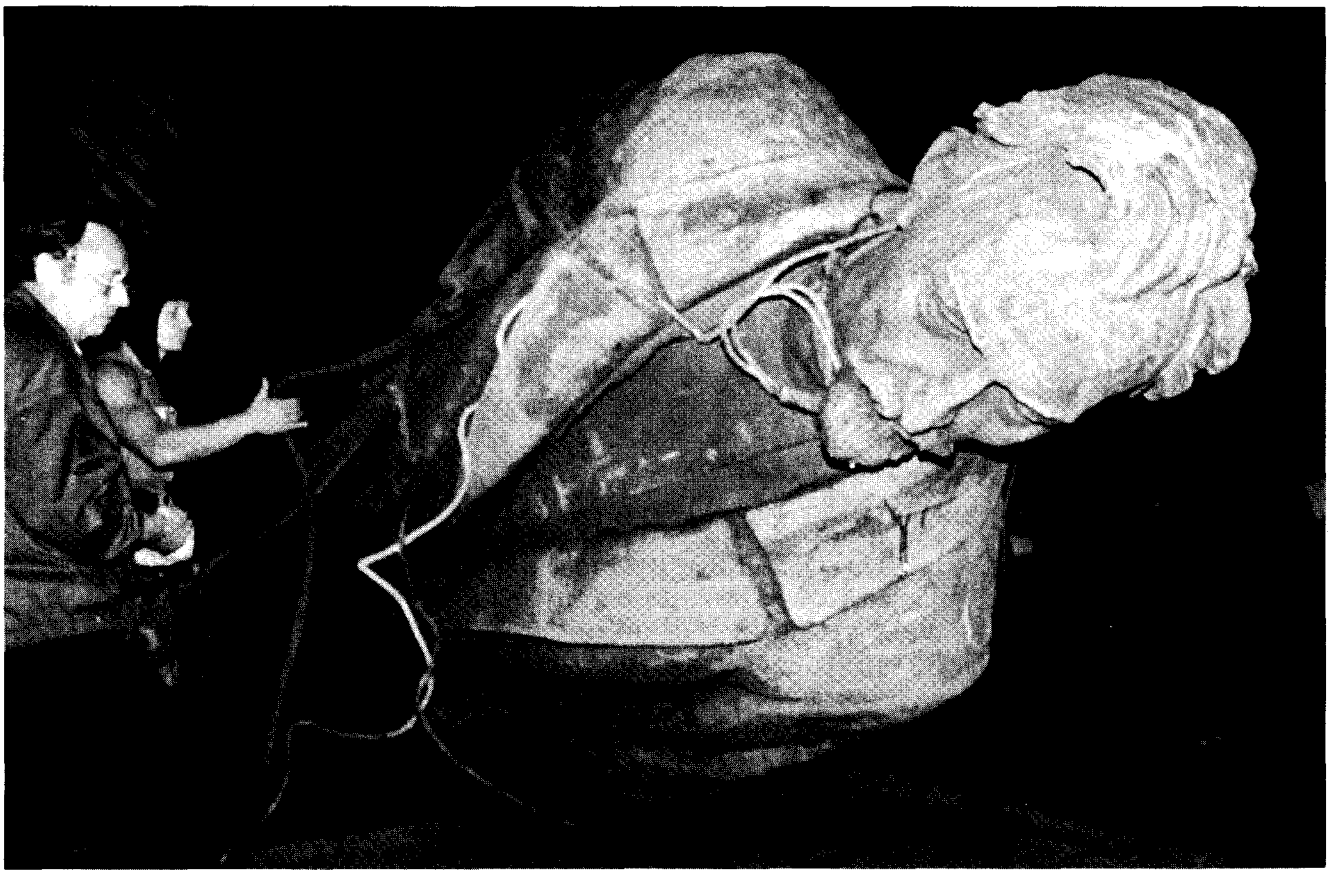

Demonstrators pull down the statue of Feliks Dzerzhinskiy, founder of the Soviet secret police, outside KGB headquarters on August 22, 1991.

—Reuters/Bettmann.

ing the transition from totalitarianism to democracy. Yel'tsin, moving quickly to capitalize on the failed plot, rang up the USSR Procurator General, N. S. Trubin, on the evening of August 21, and insisted that the criminal investigation be turned over to the RSFSR Procuracy. A battle over turf ensued, with the end result that the case is being investigated jointly by the USSR and RSFSR procuracies. To complicate matters further, however, the KGB itself is empowered by Article 126 of the RSFSR Code of Criminal Procedure to investigate those accused of treason, the crime with which the 15 are charged. This is hardly a prescription for an objective and balanced treatment of the case, particularly since the accused have already been pronounced guilty by the Soviet press.

Clearly this case of alleged treason is fraught with political implications for Gorbachev and the current political leadership in Moscow and the republics. How the investigation and trial are conducted will reveal a great deal about the democratic standards of the new transitional government. While a guarantee of the rights of the accused is clearly in the interests of democratization, many legal loopholes exist to prejudice the judicial proceedings in favor of the state, because the old legal codes, designed to protect the state rather than the individual, are still on the books. To begin with, the accused have been charged under Article 64 of the RSFSR Criminal Code, which is now completely archaic because it refers to treason against the USSR, which entity apparently no longer exists. And in accordance with the existing codes, neither the defendants nor their attorneys will have access to investigation documents until the pretrial investigation is complete, which could, with the procurator's consent, be dragged out for nine months. During that time, more of those implicated in the conspiracy might conveniently commit suicide or fall ill (Luk'yanov, the leading defendant, has already had two strokes). By law, the defendants are entitled to a public trial by jury and have the right to defend themselves in court. Yet, if the scenario about the coup suggested above has any truth, such a trial could prove highly damaging to Gorbachev and many other politicians. This might be why those leading the investigation have predicted that the trial will be closed, on the

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grounds that state secrets are at stake. Whatever happens, Gorbachev has good reason to keep the investigation out of the limelight and focus public attention on more pressing problems.

Conclusion

Although the August shakeup provided an impetus for a further democratization of the Soviet system by wiping out all vestiges of Communist party power and giving new life to the republics' demands for independence, it did not get rid of one of the greatest threats to democracy, the KGB, which over the years has moved from being an instrument of the ruling elite to being a key player in the political arena. The current talk is limited to reforming this institution, not abolishing it, though it symbolizes repression to a much greater extent than the party ever did. It is all very well to draw up a new law on the KGB, reorganize its structure, and take away some of its troops. But until Soviet citizens are protected from arbitrary police power by due process of law, it is still an open question whether liberation from communism in the Soviet Union will mean liberation from despotism. Communism was after all only a symbol of totalitarian rule, not its essence. It basically served as an ideological justification for arbitrary rule, rather than as a motivating force behind the system.

For all his accomplishments, Gorbachev never managed to provide the Soviet people with a new constitution or new legal codes, the crucial underpinnings of a democracy. Many of the constitutional and legal changes he did introduce tended to support the institutions of coercion rather than individual rights. Thus, Soviet citizens are still in the position of having their rights and freedoms dependent on the good will and democratic inclinations of the men who are in power. With the economy in a shambles and the relationship between Moscow and the republics as yet undetermined, the Soviet Union faces many potential crises ahead, crises that might tempt leaders to resort to the use of force against the people. Gorbachev for one has already demonstrated his vulnerability to reactionary elements, a failing that has discredited him with much of the Soviet population. Indeed, the fact that he is still at the helm in Moscow, although his days are probably numbered, detracts further from the positive aspects of what has been called the second Russian Revolution. Another event in this so-called revolution, the dramatic desecration of the statue of the first security police chief, Feliks Dzerzhinskiy, was greeted as a symbol of the ultimate demise of the KGB. Unfortunately, it will take more than this gesture to ensure that the KGB, or a security apparatus of a different name, will never again be used as an instrument of political repression.

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The Soviet Economy After the Coup

Anders Åslund

THE Soviet Union changed fundamentally after the abortive coup of August 19–21, 1991. What was the rule will no more be possible, and a multitude of new possibilities have opened up. First of all, communism is dead both as an ideology and as a party, but communist prejudices, ignorance, administrative patterns, and other practices persist. Second, the Union as such has been utterly discredited. Leaders of the government, the CPSU, the military, and the KGB participated in the coup. USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev had appointed them, and the USSR Supreme Soviet had confirmed their appointments. The survival of the Soviet Union was in question before the coup, and a natural conclusion is that the coup sealed its fate. Third, the coup was defeated by democratic forces, but civil society remains so undeveloped that it would be rash to claim any lasting victory for democracy. The immediate aftermath of the coup has offered far too many worrying signs. Two months after the coup, one of the strongest impressions is that the extraordinary opportunity that victory over the plotters offered for solving intractable political and economic problems is being wasted.

Anders Åslund is Professor at the Stockholm School of Economics and Director of the Stockholm Institute of Soviet and East European Economics. *To a considerable extent this paper is based on information gathered during three recent trips to the USSR: to Ukraine, August 13–17, 1991, for talks with the Ukrainian Council of Ministers; to Moscow, September 4–8, for the World Economic Forum; and to Moscow, September 17–20, for talks with the Russian Ministry of the Economy. Much of the substance is based on conversations with collaborators Igor Birman and Grigoriy Khanin, as well as with Jeffrey D. Sachs and David Lipton. In addition, the author has benefited greatly from discussions with Yevgeniy Yasin, Nikolay Petrakov, Stanislav Shatalin, Olexander Savchenko, and Konstantin Kagalovskiy. This article omits statistical tables that were published in Åslund, "Gorbachev,* Perestroyka, *and Economic Crisis,* Problems of Communism, *January-April 1991, pp. 18–41.*

The Main Economic Problems

The economic problems of the Soviet Union have not been eased by the successful suppression of the coup. On the contrary, they are evidently growing worse at an accelerating pace. Let us focus on a few key problem areas.

Shortages. The heart of the matter is aggravated shortages, which are the immediate source of the current economic crisis. If it becomes more difficult to use money to purchase goods or services, then incentives to work decline. If money becomes less acceptable as a means of exchange, barter develops, bringing with it increasing transaction costs and declining economic efficiency. In a parallel development, rationing systems proliferate. Resistance rises against commands issued by the center. In the end, republics, enterprises, and individuals simply refuse to deliver to each other. Why should anyone make an effort when there is no significant reward in sight?

Although shortages always have been apparent in the Soviet economy, they have grown much worse since 1988, when wages started rising much faster than previously. In 1990, social benefits began to skyrocket, and in 1991, state revenues collapsed. However alarming many reports may be, they tend to understate the actual extent of financial collapse.

Budgetary crisis. Until 1991, the Soviet Union had a unified state budget for the country as a whole. Republic governments merely collected revenues for the center and disbursed them in line with commands from the center. In 1991, the situation has changed The state

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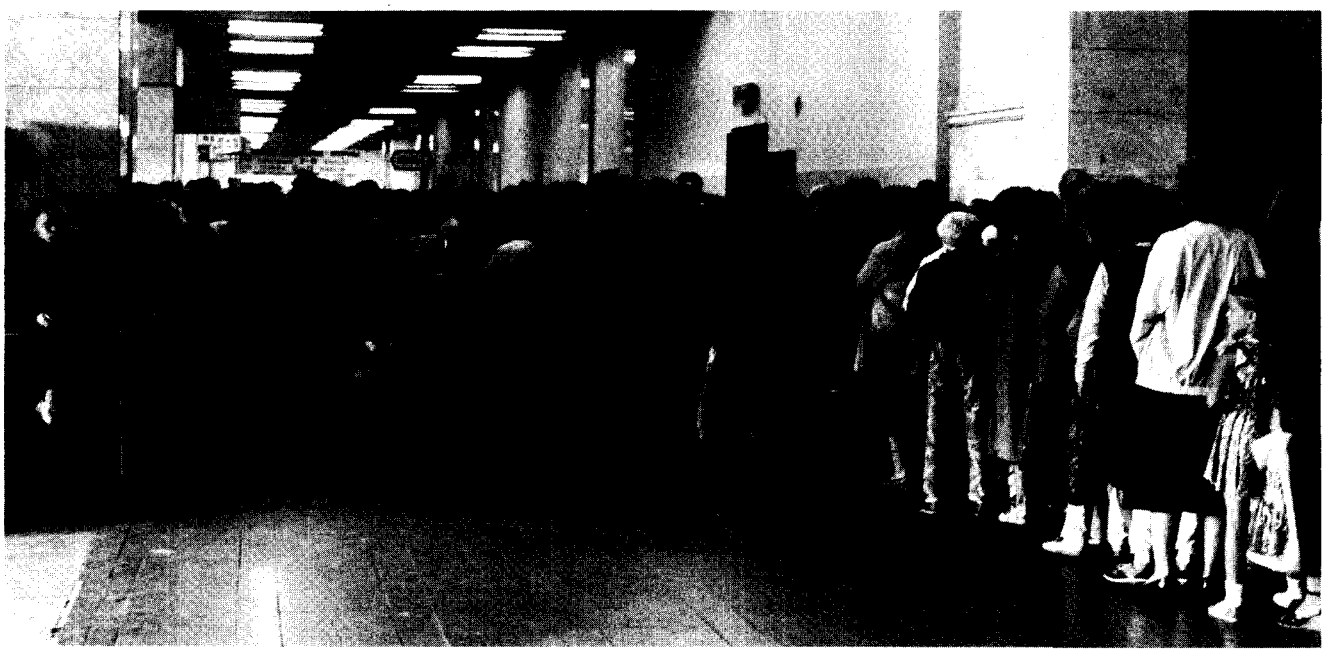

Soviet citizens queue up to buy footwear, September 1991.

—R. Netelev/TASS from Sovfoto.

budget has been divided into Union, republic, and local budgets, which are formed independently of each other. At the Union level, the budget has been separated into a Union budget, a stabilization fund, and a pension fund. In some republics, notably in Russia, a similar subdivision has occurred. All of these budgets and funds have deficits, but lower-level authorities seem to have been forced to balance their budgets.[1] In addition, one should mention the budget burden of writing off debts of collective and state farms, which has been undertaken by Agroprombank.

In order to obtain a composite picture of the consolidated budget deficit, we need to add all these deficits (too much attention has been focused on the Union budget, which represents only a fraction of the total budget deficit). To get a perspective on the following figures, we may remember that the official Soviet gross national product (GNP) for 1990 was exactly R1,000 billion.[2] Originally, the plan was for the Union budget to disburse R276.8 billion, with a budget deficit of R26.7 billion.[3] But in September 1991, the USSR Ministry of Finance stated that the budget deficit would reach R144 billion this year.[4] By then, the extra-budgetary stabilization fund planned for R114 billion had only received R6 billion of R60 billion planned revenues from the republics, but it is unclear how much had actually been disbursed.[5] The original intention was that the stabilization fund would be largely financed through proceeds from privatization sales.[6] One can infer a deficit of several tens of billions of rubles in this fund. In addition, there is an all-Union pension fund of possibly R40 billion, from which money must be disbursed. This fund is barely receiving any revenues, since it was to be financed through the sales tax of 5 percent introduced in 1991, which has hardly been paid by anyone.[7] This fund is generally ignored, but it likely adds at least R30 billion to the center's deficit. A very conservative estimate for the total Union budget deficit would be somewhat more than R200 billion for the whole of 1991.

To this, one must add the republic budget deficits. The budget deficit of the Russian republic alone for 1991 is headed toward some R120 billion.[8] The Ukrainian budget deficit is projected at R38 billion for 1991.[9] If we assume that the other republics have proportionally large budget deficits, and if we consider that these two republics account for more than three-quarters of the national income of the USSR, we arrive at a conserva-

[1]Personal communication from officials in St. Petersburg.
[2]Goskomstat SSSR, *SSSR v tsifrakh v 1990 godu* (The USSR in Figures in 1990), Moscow, Finansy i Statistika, 1991, p. 38.
[3]*Izvestiya* (Moscow), Jan. 15, 1991.
[4]Ibid., Sept. 14, 1991. I presume that this is a projection for the year as a whole, but that is not clear. It might also be for the first eight months of 1991.
[5]Ibid; and *Pravitel'stvennyy Vestnik* (Moscow), No. 5, 1991, p. 4.
[6]*Izvestiya*, Dec. 30, 1990.
[7]*Pravitel'stvennyy Vestnik*, No. 5, 1991, pp. 4–5.
[8]Very recent estimate by Grigoriy Khanin.
[9]Information from the Ukrainian Ministry of Finance, Aug. 15, 1991.

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tive estimate of slightly over R200 billion for the total budget deficit at the republic level.

Adding up the budget deficits at all-Union and republic levels, we arrive at a consolidated budget deficit for the whole of 1991 of at least R400 billion. We do not know what the nominal GNP for 1991 will be, but given a current inflation rate of over 100 percent and a sharp decline in GNP, this budget deficit may correspond to between 20 and 30 percent of GNP.[10] According to Yevgeniy Yasin and Sergey Aleksashenko, the consolidated budget deficit amounted to R188 billion during the first half of 1991—that is, some 23.5 percent of GNP for the period.[11] It is bound to be considerably higher during the second half of 1991, presumably in the range of 25–30 percent of GNP.

A new aspect of the budget crisis in 1991 is that state revenues have collapsed. During the first quarter of 1991, the Union budget obtained only 36 percent of planned revenues (disbursements also fell below plan, but amounted to 77 percent of their planned level).[12] In September 1991, it appears that revenue fell to about 15 percent of the planned level.[13] The situation seems to be slightly better at the republic level. Part of the dilemma is that both the Union and the republics claim jurisdiction over the same enterprises and thus demand the same taxes, although the taxes are forwarded by the republic ministries of finance.

As these figures make evident, this is a very severe budgetary crisis. The only comparable case that comes to mind is Chile at the end of President Salvador Allende's reign, when that country's budget deficit reached 30 percent of GNP.

Toward hyperinflation. Under the circumstances, there is increasing likelihood of hyperinflation, although the mechanism for propagating such an inflationary spiral is not fully developed.[14] A necessary precondition of hyperinflation is that prices be liberalized. In this respect, the latest official figures show an increase of 103 percent in retail prices and of 164 percent in wholesale prices from September 1990 to September 1991.[15] Current estimates set inflation at 2–3 percent a week, but statistical measurements remain extremely imprecise.

The expansion of the money supply was temporarily slowed by massive retail price increases on April 2, 1991, averaging 70–90 percent. Even so, the amount of cash in circulation rose from R132.7 billion at that time to about R150 billion as of July 1, and then exploded to 199 billion as of October 1.[16] A forecast by Academician Nikolay Petrakov, supported by USSR Gosbank Chairman Viktor Gerashchenko, is that the total new cash emitted this year will be some R100 billion—about four times as much as in 1990.[17] Forecasts of inflation in 1991 published in the Soviet press range from 150 to 1,000 percent—with most falling between 150 and 200 percent.

Declining production. The aggravated shortages already brought about a significant economic decline in 1990, and the situation has grown far worse in 1991. According to official statistics, Soviet national income fell by 13 percent in the first three quarters of 1991 in comparison with the same period of the previous year.[18] If we assume that hidden inflation remains at about 5 percent, the real decline in income would amount to 18 percent. Since the trend is continuing downward, a simple extrapolation would give a real slump of some 20 percent for the year as a whole.[19]

This decline in production is most starkly reflected in Soviet foreign trade. A fall of 9 percent in oil production for the first half of 1991 resulted in the halving of exports of both crude oil and petroleum products. Altogether, exports decreased by 23.4 percent for the period. Since the USSR did not attract new foreign credits and had to service its foreign debt of about $60 billion, it was forced to cut imports by as much as 47.7 percent, further harming the economy.[20]

Any attempt to assess the weakness of the Soviet economy raises old arguments regarding the size of Soviet GNP.[21] If we start with GNP for 1990 (R1,000 billion) and divide it by total population (290 million),[22] we arrive at R3,448 per capita. The big issue is what ex-

[10]These are figures used by Academicians Stanislaw Shatalin and Nikolay Petrakov, with whom I discussed the matter in detail, Sept. 10–12, 1991.

[11]*Izvestiya*, Sept. 11, 1991. The authors include in their calculations the writing-off of debts of agricultural enterprises.

[12]*Ekonomika i Zhizn'* (Moscow), No. 21, 1991, p. 1.

[13]"Guesstimates" in September 1991 by Soviet economists involved in the government reform endeavors.

[14]Ardo H. Hansson, "The Emergence and Stabilization of Extreme Inflationary Pressures in the Soviet Union," in Anders Åslund, Ed., *The Post-Soviet Economy: Soviet and Western Perspectives*, London, Pinter, forthcoming 1992.

[15]*Ekonomika i Zhizn'*, No. 43, 1991, p. 7.

[16]Ibid., No. 30, 1991, Supplement, p. 1; and ibid., No. 43, 1991, p. 7.

[17]Statement in Stockholm, Sept. 11, 1991.

[18]*Ekonomika i Zhizn'*, No. 43, 1991, p. 7.

[19]Grigoriy Khanin argues that it is more likely to be 25 percent, and Yevgeniy Yasin operates with an estimate of a decline on the order of 20–25 percent.

[20]*Ekonomika i Zhizn'*, No. 30, 1991, Supplement, p. 3.

[21]Anders Åslund, "How Small Is the Soviet National Income?" in Henry S. Rowen and Charles Wolf, Jr., Eds., *The Impoverished Superpower; Perestroika and the Soviet Military Burden*, San Francisco, ICS Press, 1990, pp. 13–61, 288–305.

[22]Goskomstat SSSR, *SSSR v tsifrakh v 1990 godu*, pp. 10, 38.

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change rate to use to convert this to US dollar equivalents. Various Soviet experts estimate a market-clearing exchange rate in the range of R7 to R46 per US$1.[23] These estimates would put Soviet GNP in the range of $75 to $493 per capita. To be sure, these exchange-rate estimates were as of mid-1991, when prices were approximately twice as high as in 1990. Therefore, we should multiply by two, getting a Soviet GNP per capita for 1991 in the range of $150 to $1,000. Considering how undervalued the domestic currency turned out to be on the black market in Poland once price liberalization took effect, we may simply assume that the current black-market exchange rate of approximately R40 to R50 per dollar is exaggerated by a factor of 4 or 5. For simplicity and caution, let us use the most favorable exchange rate offered by the Soviet officials above, which gives a 1991 per capita Soviet GNP (after liberalization) of about $1,000. By this estimate, the USSR is really a low middle-income country according to the World Bank definition, comparable to the poorer South American countries.[24]

To sum up, the main Soviet economic dilemma is that shortages have increased sharply. While the crisis erupted because of excessive wage increases, the central problem at present is a combination of an explosion of social expenditures and a collapse of state revenues. In spite of price regulation for some 60 percent of commodities, inflation has already exceeded 100 percent in 1991. Hyperinflation is a distinct possibility, as the money supply is exploding. Meanwhile, shortages have prompted a sharp decline in production, leading to a dramatic slump in exports which together with debt obligations has caused an even greater reduction in imports.

Strategic Economic Issues

Behind the budgetary collapse looms the strife between the center and the republics. Especially after the coup, it should be obvious to everyone that the Union can no longer resolve contentious economic issues, since such resolution requires a government with strong political legitimacy.

The agenda for economic change is pretty obvious. There is already a broad consensus among Western and East European experts on what a transition from a command economy to a market economy should look like.[25] There should be a comprehensive economic change involving macroeconomic stabilization (elimination of the budget deficit, and establishment of a strict monetary policy and some incomes policies); domestic liberalization, in particular price liberalization; freedom of enterprise; and integration into the world economy (some kind of convertibility, substantial devaluation, the abolition of licensing quotas, and establishment of a low customs tariff). All these changes could and should be introduced simultaneously. In parallel, a process of rapid privatization should be launched.

Two of these measures are particularly likely to harm the population in the short term, namely, balancing the budget and liberalizing prices. It is for this reason that the government implementing such changes requires substantial legitimacy. In order to eliminate the budget deficit in the current situation, it will be necessary both to cut expenditures and to raise state revenues substantially. Obvious expenditures to cut are defense and all kinds of subsidies, but social programs will have to be reduced as well. The latter two measures will have an immediate impact on the population. It is natural to combine the abolition of subsidies with the liberalization of prices, as these two measures tend to be two sides of the same coin. Nominal "real" incomes will inevitably fall substantially, although in a shortage economy, real incomes tend to be illusory, since people cannot find goods to purchase at the nominal prices. Even so, stabilization and price liberalization will involve substantial and real sacrifices.

If the Union can no longer carry out these vital changes, the obvious conclusion is that they will have to be executed at the republic level. Moreover, even the republics, notably Russia, may be too large and diverse to be able to pursue the necessary changes in the longer run. There are already voices in the Soviet debate arguing: "Reforms in Russia are only possible at the regional level . . . ."[26] Immediately after the coup, however, the republics had a unique chance to implement the necessary economic changes.

The crucial levers that the republics need to control are monetary policy, budgetary policy, and economic policy in general. In this setting, efforts to achieve a nationwide currency union seem beside the point. Although a variety of currency unions have existed in the

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[23] *Izvestiya*, Aug. 20, 1991.

[24] The World Bank, *World Development Report 1991*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991, pp. 204–05.

[25] The best work on this topic is Olivier Blanchard, Rudiger Dornbusch, Paul Krugman, Richard Layard, and Lawrence Summers, *Reform in Eastern Europe*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1991. See also David Lipton and Jeffrey Sachs, "Creating a Market Economy in Eastern Europe: The Case of Poland, *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* (Washington, DC), No. 1, 1990, pp. 75–147; Janos Kornai, *The Road to a Free Economy*, New York, Norton, 1990, and the World Bank, "The Transformation of Economies in Central and Eastern Europe: Issues, Progress, and Prospects," Staff Paper, Washington, DC, April 1991.

[26] Sergey Kosarenko and Andrey Neshchadin, "What After the Coup? A Unified Economic Space Is Impossible," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (Moscow), Sept. 18, 1991.

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world, they have not been established in the kind of desperate crisis that the Soviet Union and all its republics now face. Distrust among the republics is palpable. Even if a Union agreement on these issues were to be struck, it would take far too long to implement. In the meantime, the economic collapse may become far more serious than it has been to date. Right now, the only sensible choice seems to be to focus on solving the vital problems in the fastest way. The natural conclusion is that at least the major Soviet republics need their own currencies, governed by their own central banks, and that their fiscal policies should be run by their own ministries of finance.

Ukraine has long since decided to introduce its own currency, the *hryvnia,* and it seems adamant on this measure.[27] The Belorussian government, too, is intent on introducing its own currency and pursuing an independent fiscal policy.[28] Even if it is a common assessment that currency reforms will wait until the end of 1992,[29] it is plain that they will take place. If currency reforms are implemented by surprise and in competition, one republic after the other will be forced to launch currency reforms, in the same way as East Germany was forced to launch a currency reform in June 1948 immediately after the West German currency reform. Rather than hoping for the exceedingly unlikely event that the Soviet Union as a whole will be able to pursue any kind of coordinated stabilization, everyone should accept that the best course is to undertake a preemptive currency reform, say, by perforating the bank-notes in each republic on a certain day, with, for example, a "U" in Ukraine, an "R" in Russia, etc.[30] Then each republic would instantly get its own currency, and there would be no cause for arbitrage at the outset, facilitating a smooth preemptive currency reform. Soon, the perforated bank-notes could be exchanged for a properly printed currency. The faster such a measure is undertaken, the quicker stabilization and systemic change could occur.

Short-term Economic Issues

Much of the current economic debate in the Soviet Union concerns short-term economic issues that are usually not related to strategic economic aims but rather conceal them. In fact, many decision-makers are so absorbed by short-term tasks that they forget their long-term intentions. The three most prominent concerns seem to be to avoid a complete breakdown in trade between the republics, to guarantee sufficient food supplies for the winter, and to safeguard energy supplies both for domestic winter needs and for exports. All three issues are largely approached in the context of old command-economy approaches.

Much of the current economic decline can be explained by bottleneck multipliers. One factory fails to fulfill its state order by some 10 percent, and its failure prompts the next factory in the line of production to miss fulfilling its state order by at least as much, etc. The most extreme case of such a breakdown in a command economy is Albania, where the level of national income in the third quarter of 1991 was about one-quarter of what it had been one year earlier, as the central commands just came to an end, and no market economy emerged to replace them.[31] Something similar may happen in the USSR, although it seems unlikely that the decline would be equally steep, as the USSR is a more multifaceted economy with a much larger informal private sector.

To those Soviet economists who realize this danger, the standard reaction is to call for the maintenance of the old economic links at any price—for example, they argue for continued heavy subsidization of raw materials prices, maintaining them at levels far below world market prices. A more logical reaction would be to call for an instant switch to a market economy. That is indeed how the Albanian government has reacted to a much more severe crisis in a much poorer country.[32]

The provision of food for the winter is probably the greatest immediate public concern. Current estimates suggest that the Soviet grain harvest will reach about 165 million metric tons, which is about 10 percent lower than the average for the last five years. The main problem, however, is that peasants, state farms, and collective farms do not want to sell to the state. Total grain procurement seems to have fallen below 40 million tons—about half the planned level. In Ukraine, the grain harvest was estimated at some 42 million tons. The procurement target was 17 million tons, but the government managed to acquire only 10 million tons.[33] The government response was to call for imports of grain

[27]This was the overwhelming impression that I received in talks with some 30 senior Ukrainian officials and academics in Kiev in mid-August 1991, the week before the coup. Since then, particularly in the campaign for the republic's presidential election on December 1, these tendencies have been reinforced.

[28]*Izvestiya,* Sept. 14, 1991.

[29]Ibid., Sept. 7, 1991.

[30]I owe this idea to Jeffrey Sachs, from a conversation on Sept. 7, 1991. Rudiger Dornbusch suggested the same idea at a seminar in Moscow on Sept. 19.

[31]Anders Åslund and Örjan Sjöberg, "Privatisation and Transition to a Market Economy in Albania," Working Paper No. 27, 1991, Stockholm Institute of Soviet and East European Economics, p. 11.

[32]Ibid.

[33]*Izvestiya,* Sept. 17, 1991.

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and "more energetic procurement efforts,"[34] whatever that may mean.

Similarly, the Russian government is trying to revive oil production with a regional program for West Siberia of the old kind, containing a wish list of development goals, rather than facilitating foreign investment. According to Soviet oil experts, the worst bottleneck in oil production is in the repair and maintenance of oil wells, which can only be undertaken effectively by Western enterprises with modern technology. Western involvement in these areas could yield more or less instant results.

A clear-sighted view, but unfortunately one shared by only a tiny minority, has been expressed by Otto Lačis: "It is especially important to liberalize prices of agricultural products, fuels, and energy. Without that it will really be impossible to avoid starvation and cold."[35] Regrettably, although the short-term concerns of the Soviet public point toward the need for a very fast change of economic system, these concerns are instead addressed by old command-economy measures, and the attention of many a policy-maker is diverted from the necessary systemic change.

Critique of Post-Coup Policy-Making

A first observation about economic policy-making in the Soviet Union after the coup is that contrary to my arguments above, the making of strategic policy decisions has been concentrated in the hands of the Union government, or rather, the provisional "Committee on the Operative Management of the National Economy," which was set up through a presidential decree on August 24. It was headed by Russian Prime Minister Ivan Silayev, with Yuriy Luzhkov (deputy mayor of Moscow), Arkadiy Volskiy (chairman of the Scientific-Industrial Union), and Grigoriy Yavlinskiy as his deputies.[36] In due time, it was supposed to be replaced by an Inter-Republic Economic Committee, which would become a Union economic government.

In early September 1991, a number of alternative draft treaties on an economic union were presented. The politically most important ones were those elaborated by teams headed respectively by Grigoriy Yavlinskiy,[37] Academician Stanislav Shatalin,[38] and Russian deputy prime minister and minister of the economy Yevgeniy Saburov.[39] Discussion has centered on the Yavlinskiy proposal, which was eventually signed by eight republics in the Kremlin on October 18, in a much-altered form.[40] The eight republics were Russia, Belorussia, Armenia and the five Central Asian republics. In the end, it was called a "Treaty on an Economic Community," which had been the concept used in Shatalin's draft. The Shatalin "Convention" left many more unresolved issues than the Yavlinskiy draft. The Saburov "scenario" was essentially written for the Russian federation, and was therefore less applicable on the national scale; moreover, his "proposals" were pretty rudimentary. Regarding relations between the Union and the republics, Yavlinskiy pushed for as strong a center as possible, while Saburov put the emphasis on the republics, and Shatalin stood somewhere in between. Let us scrutinize the stands of these programs on the three key issues to be allocated either to the Union or the republics for resolution: currency reform, budgetary policy, and price liberalization.

The Yavlinskiy proposal hedges on the whole currency issue, favoring the ruble as a common currency while at the same time allowing the republics to launch their own currencies within a common monetary system. One of the men behind the proposal explained that they envisioned a number of "Scottish pounds," that is, currencies that are in effect rubles that are controlled centrally but printed under diverse names. Shatalin's group leaves the issue open, by offering a choice between a common currency or republic currencies, but it expects a clear choice to be made. The Saburov scenario, interestingly, anticipates that other republics may go for their own currencies and suggests that Russia prepare for the introduction of an exclusively Russian ruble if necessary. Clearly, the Yavlinskiy proposal is neither viable nor helpful. Such confusion over basic currency issues is more or less certain to delay systemic change and stabilization, which may cost the society dearly. Currently, the first task must be to make a choice in this regard. Saburov's approach, then, seems most helpful, but it needs to be clarified.

The second key issue is the elimination of the budget deficit. Yavlinskiy's draft treaty advocates that the republics pursue a coordinated budget and tax policy, agreeing to set a limit to the deficit of the consolidated

[34]Attempts to increase procurement by raising procurement prices had failed, since the farms could not use the money they gained.

[35]*Izvestiya*, Sept. 12, 1991.

[36]Ibid., Aug. 26, 1991.

[37]"Draft Treaty on an Economic Union," *Ekonomika i Zhizn'*, No. 39, 1991, pp. 4–5.

[38]See "Convention on the Creation of an Economic Community," *Izvestiya*, Sept. 4, 1991.

[39]Saburov has authored two consecutive proposals, of which the first one is the most radical and extensive: "Scenario of Economic Reform," mimeo (in Russian), Moscow, no date (but apparently July 1991), 54 pages; "Draft Proposals for the Organization of Economic Interaction of Sovereign States," *Ekonomika i Zhizn'*, No. 39, 1991, p. 5.

[40]"Treaty on an Economic Community," *Ekonomika i Zhizn'*, No. 42, 1991, Supplement, pp. 2–4.

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state budgets. Shatalin's draft convention merely states that these issues should be subject to multilateral agreements. Saburov's scenario suggests that budget deficits at all levels should be covered by the revenues from privatization as well as the sales of bonds. At another point, the text proposes that the Russian government undertake extraordinary measures to raise revenues and cut expenditures. The latter is what is needed, but the principles for how this could be achieved are not given and it is not clearly stated that the budget deficit must be eliminated. Of course, it can be argued that politically it is too early to reveal such details, which preferably should be presented just before they are accepted and adopted. Yavlinskiy's approach simply evades the problem, and it is not credible that it would be possible to achieve such a coordination of budget policy at the Union level. Nor does he state how deep the cuts should be.

The third key question is price liberalization. Again, Yavlinskiy generally advocates coordination among the republics on the transition to free prices, which will evidently be gradual. Shatalin seems to avoid the issue altogether, while Saburov wants the Russian government to undertake price liberalization, though he, too, proposes a gradual approach. Once more, we find Yavlinskiy proposing a vague, highly unrealistic coordination of policies. Actually, several republics do not even want any price liberalization. Notably Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan remain harsh dictatorships. Characteristically, Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov has declared that his republic is not ready for democracy and that he prefers the Chinese model of limited economic reform and a prohibition against political manifestations.[41] Any coordination with such republics would imply a very long delay in any reform. Saburov's Russian program at least realizes that price liberalization, if it is to occur, will have to be carried out by individual republic governments.

A general shortcoming of all the Soviet reform programs to have been published so far—with the exception of the Western-inspired Grand Bargain or "Window of Opportunity"[42]—is that they have no concept of macroeconomic stabilization whatsoever. Hence, they all more or less explicitly propose a gradual liberalization of prices, a gradual reduction of budget deficits, a gradual market adjustment of exchange rates, and a gradual abolition of state orders, not realizing that this

Soviet economist Grigoriy Yavlinskiy.

—AP/Wide World.

gradualism is almost bound to lead to hyperinflation.[43] Whoever comes to the fore will have to rethink and simply learn macroeconomic stabilization if any serious policy is to begin. The International Monetary Fund is likely to precipitate such a decision by making loans and technical assistance contingent on it.

There is a wide Soviet appreciation of the need for price liberalization, but the current majority stand in ruling Soviet circles seems to be that it would be irresponsible to release all prices at once. A common suggestion is that the prices of about 20 of the leading commodities in inter-republic trade should be allowed to rise but still be fixed at levels far below world-market levels for some time. In particular, this applies to oil, whose world-market price now stands about 60 times higher than its domestic price in the Soviet Union.[44] Otto Lačis's blunt blunt prescription remains a rare exception.

[41] *Izvestiya*, Sept. 17, 1991.

[42] "Window of Opportunity: Joint Program for Western Cooperation in the Soviet Transformation to Democracy and the Market Economy," mimeo, Harvard University and EPCenter (Center for Economic and Political Research [Moscow]), June 29, 1991, 52 pages.

[43] Michael Bruno, Guido Di Tella, Rudiger Dornbusch, and Stanley Fischer, Eds., *Inflation Stabilization: The Experience of Israel, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, and Mexico*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1988; and Hanson, loc. cit.

[44] This depends, of course, on what exchange rate we use. The domestic Soviet wholesale price of oil is R70 per ton, while the world market price is about $125 per ton ($20 per barrel). If we use the official ruble/dollar exchange rate for tourists (32:1), the world-market price is 57 times higher than the domestic price.

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In fact, it would hardly be possible to balance the budget without liberalizing both food prices and energy prices.[45] Raising prices for food would do away with most subsidies, and raising energy prices would reduce wastage and lead to increased exports (the higher profits that Soviet oil companies would reap could be heavily taxed). In order not to arouse inflationary expectations, it is vital to undertake the necessary liberalizations in one step, as Czechoslovakia seems to have successfully done at the outset of 1991.

A prominent aspect of many proposed Soviet reform programs is privatization. In this regard, the Russian government program is the most radical, and much of the legislation for this program has already been adopted. The Russian land reform law was promulgated on December 3, 1990, and on July 3, 1991, a law on privatization of state and municipal enterprises and a statute on the Russian fund of federal property were promulgated. General principles include rapid privatization at reduced prices and partial free distribution through privatization accounts or vouchers, seemingly along Chilean lines.[46] The 500-day program of August 1990 insisted on fast privatization as well, but it advocated sales at market prices; moreover, the Union law on this matter only looks to "destatization," ending up with various forms of collective enterprises without enumerating distinct property rights for individuals. In this case, it is already obvious that the Russian program is more ambitious than the Union one.

But why has Yavlinskiy's proposal become so prominent if it is so deficient? The simple answer is that Yavlinskiy has been most forceful and has taken the initiative. He has been most eloquent on prime issues, while others have been bogged down in matters that ought to be secondary. In particular, top officials of the republics seem to spend their time traveling around asking each other what they want rather than making clear to themselves what they actually want themselves. Presumably, their intention is to avoid being blamed for having finished off the Union. But its end seems inevitable, as no republic accepts a political union. In the absence of same, an economic union cannot really function, since basic economic decisions are deeply political. Another reason for the central position of Yavlinskiy is that President Gorbachev and many of the personalities that the West has come to know support him at the Union level. The republic leaders are not used to appearing in the spotlight of Western media. Moreover, the outside world has not realized as yet how devoid of real influence the Union actually is on matters other than foreign policy.

In the end, the Yavlinskiy program won out on all three key issues. Saburov retreated, as another camp of more Russian-oriented economists emerged around the Russian State Council. They were headed by Yegor Gaidar, who is the Director of the Institute of Economic Policy at the Academy of the National Economy in Moscow. His team included Aleksandr Shokhin, Russian minister of labor, and a number of bright young Russian economists in their 30's. The Gaidar team contained the best-qualified Soviet economists, who actually understood the essence of macroeconomic stabilization.

The Treaty on an Economic Community underlines "the necessity of preserving the ruble as a common currency of a unified monetary system." Its signatories were supposed to agree on "the limitation of the deficits of the consolidated state budgets," and they were also supposed to agree on pricing policy and systemic change.[47]

In October 1991, the Saburov camp became known as the "unionists," while the Gaidar camp was called the "isolationists." Gaidar realized the importance of radical stabilization and systemic change. He knew that such radical measures could only be implemented at the republic level. While Saburov wanted a gradual price liberalization, Gaidar urged a virtually complete price deregulation effective January 1, 1992. In the end, Saburov dropped his tentative proposal of a Russian ruble, but Gaidar insisted on its necessity.[48]

After having signed the Treaty on an Economic Community on October 18, and thus having supported Saburov, Russian President Boris Yel'tsin turned around completely on October 28. In his first major policy speech, he embraced the Gaidar program of price liberalization as of January 1, 1992, and also endorsed elimination of the budget deficit.[49] He was ambiguous on the introduction of an independent Russian ruble, but this appears to be a tactical device to avoid criticism for having ruined the Union. In effect, the nonoperative Treaty on an Economic Community had been jeopardized, and the option of radical systemic change and liberalization lay open.

During September and October, the Russian government structures had been in shambles with several parallel operating bodies. Now, Yel'tsin offered to lead the government himself and reduce the cabinet to some 20 ministers. If the Gaidar team really receives full support

[45]A lesson from Poland that David Lipton has taught me.

[46]*Ekonomika i Zhizn'*, No. 31, 1991, Supplement.

[47]Loc. cit., p. 2.

[48]Personal communications in September and October 1991 from members of both camps, as well as from outside observers.

[49]*Sovetskaya Rossiya* (Moscow), Oct. 29, 1991.

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from Yel'tsin (he may back off once again), there is hope for truly revolutionary economic change in Russia. If so, Russia is bound to take the lead. Ukraine is preoccupied by its December 1 presidential election and referendum on independence.

Prospects for the Post-Soviet Economies

Currently, the Soviet economy is approaching a free fall. A major conclusion of this article is that the combined macroeconomic stabilization and liberalization can only take place at republic level. Only in some of the republics is the necessary political legitimacy to be found, but even in the republics, it shrinks further with every day that no serious economic measures are undertaken.

In practice, at least the major republics, such as Ukraine and Russia, will need their own currencies. The main task of the Union government should be to facilitate a coordinated currency reform, so that those republics that so desire can launch systemic changes. The republic governments must face up to the situation and put themselves in order so that they can take over economic policy-making and monetary policy. In particular, they must stop looking upon short-term issues, such as inter-republic trade, food supplies, and energy supplies, as if they were separate from the strategic economic reform. The shortage of food and energy can only be overcome with price liberalization, and the same is true of the unwillingness of republics to deliver to each other. The urgency of these short-term demands are only further arguments to go ahead with the systemic shift as fast as possible, and that ought to be in early 1992. The social cost of any delay will be great.

For the West, this implies that the prime target of technical aid should be the union republics, not the Union, which is on the verge of complete dissolution.[50] The problem of food shortages is essentially one of lacking incentives to sell food already produced. As a precondition of any food aid, the West should demand both price deregulation of foodstuffs and the privatization of food trade and of trucks, which are available in large numbers and could easily be auctioned off to individuals for use in transporting food to the markets. These measures may be sufficient to solve the acute shortages of food. The West should naturally encourage the republics to undertake comprehensive economic reforms such as those pursued in Eastern Europe. Then, substantial funds will be needed for stabilization funds and balance-of-payments support, both to keep foreign trade functioning and to mitigate the social cost of the economic disruption that will inevitably occur.

[50]Carlos Asilis and Stuart Brown, "Western Aid and Soviet Reform: The Role of Coordination," Working Paper No. 25, 1991, Stockholm Institute of Soviet and East European Economics.

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Farewell to Soviet Foreign Policy

Vernon V. Aspaturian

MANY years ago, Stalin's favorite prosecutor, Andrey Vyshinskiy, sarcastically observed that "The problem of the 'dying away' of the state is a purely theoretical problem" devoid of practical significance.[1] Today, of course, the question of the "dying away" of the Soviet state is of paramount concern not only within the Soviet Union but worldwide. As the Soviet Union crumbles—a process accelerated by the abortive August coup—Soviet foreign policy appears to be disappearing with it, to be replaced by the foreign policies of Russia and the other republics.

The overwhelming majority of the republics have declared their "independence" and intention to conduct their own foreign affairs and to develop their own defense establishments and policies. Whatever Union survives, if any, will not likely be a composite international juridical personality. However, the state structures of the republics, including Russia, are not yet fully in place. In this regard, the Russian republic appears to be the most underdeveloped, since until very recently it was virtually indistinguishable from the USSR. The non-Russian republics appear at this point to be more beyond the control of the center than is the Russian republic. This is, in part, because Yel'tsin's Russia remains undecided as to whether it should demolish the Union or preempt it. The struggle between the two Moscows represents more and more a contest between two competing "Russian" governments.

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Currently, Mikhail Gorbachev's presidency and Union represent little more than the empty shell of a former global power, whose presence is felt more abroad than at home. Although it was Gorbachev and his program of *perestroyka, glasnost',* and *demokratizatsiya* that set in motion the events that culminated in the ruin of the Soviet empire and the end of its status as one of the two global powers, these consequences were certainly not part of his original design. Why and how this great empire collapsed so completely, and so swiftly, in less than six years, is one of the great enigmas of this century.

No matter what happens to Gorbachev, Eduard Shevardnadze, and Aleksandr Yakovlev—the troika that was largely responsible for initiating these developments—the world will long remember what they have wrought and will be eternally grateful that it was brought about without war and the widespread material destruction and human carnage that one would normally expect to accompany transformations of the revolutionary sort experienced of late in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The collapse of this totalitarian political system that at its furthest extent embraced more than one-third of the world's population and territory and at one time appeared on the verge of engulfing the rest of the planet, is truly a remarkable and historically unique development. In this regard, Gorbachev certainly earned his Nobel Peace Prize.

Hidden Agenda or Incompetence?

No matter how welcome the collapse of Soviet power is to the wider world and to many citizens of the Soviet Union itself, there are those among Gorbachev's coun-

[1] A. Y. Vyshinsky, *The Teachings of Lenin and Stalin on the Proletarian Revolution and the State,* London, n.p., 1948, pp. 115–16.

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trymen who look upon him with animosity and even hatred for these deeds. These people are found among all nationalities, but especially among the Russians and partisans of the *ancien* communist *régime,* who number in the millions and to whose support the coup-plotters apparently looked. The collapse of the economy, the eruption of political anarchy, the disintegration of the Soviet state, the loss of empire, the erosion of military power—all of which were the consequences of Gorbachev's stewardship, intended or not—constituted the backdrop to the coup that failed.

In particular, it appeared to many that Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, and Yel'tsin (who inadvertently contributed to the process of decomposition by making unrealistic demands on Gorbachev and by establishing the precedent that national self-determination should prevail when he opportunistically used the Russian republic as a rival power center) were responding to the cheers and hurrahs of the outside world and currying favor with the Western media, popular opinion, and even statesmen, especially American presidents. This concern for their image in the West is amply, if indirectly, verified by the eagerness with which Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, and Yel'tsin appear to have ignored or postponed addressing critical post-coup problems and issues in order to write books for Western publishers. This quest for hard-currency advances while the Union and the Russian governments were mired in turmoil and disorientation struck many Soviet and Russian citizens as bordering on the obscene, a virtual caricature of the greed and venality of life under capitalism.

But there is a deeper question. The state that Gorbachev inherited in 1985 was a global power, flawed, but as yet uncrippled. It was armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons and an immense conventional military force. It ruled over an inner empire of non-Russian nationalities, an outer empire in Eastern Europe, and an extended empire of socialist-oriented countries in the Third World. It was hegemonical leader of one of the world's two alliance systems, the Warsaw Pact, and the center of a world communist movement. Yet, in less than six years, all was in shambles. Was this dénouement the inevitable result of "underlying factors"? Or did it reflect decisions made or not made—i.e., was it the result of purposive action or incompetence? On balance, I would contend that Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, Yel'tsin, the coup-plotters, and all the forces and institutions that supported them bear a share of the responsibility. What emerges is a picture of a governing stratum characterized by immense incompetence, indecisiveness, impulsiveness, and by either a deficit of vision or a surfeit of naïveté.

Without subscribing to any conspiracy theory, one can point to certain hidden agendas shared overtly or implicitly by Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, and Yakovlev, which largely explained the rapid flow of events. At the same time, one would observe that once the reforms were introduced, they achieved their own momentum and spun out of control. Hence, the charges of deceit and incompetence are both correct to a certain degree.

The manner in which Gorbachev skillfully manipulated the gradual ouster of every member of the Politburo and Secretariat who was in office at the time of his selection as general secretary, and his elimination of opportunistic coalition partners picked up along the way, is one strong indication of a conscious plan. Another was Gorbachev's practice of disavowing certain intentions and goals imputed to him by his detractors and his subsequent reversal of fields to pursue such goals. The most salient such shift is his disavowal of the charge that he wanted to eliminate the monopoly role of the Communist party in the political system and then the adoption of constitutional amendments in late 1990 that accomplished precisely that.

More direct evidence can be found in the speeches and writings of Gorbachev and Shevardnadze. Both have now revealed that as early as the late Brezhnev years, the two together had arrived at the conclusion that the Soviet system was rotten and that once they were in a position to remedy and rectify the system, they would do so. In his book, *The Future Belongs to Freedom,* Shevardnadze stated:

My knowledge of the true state of affairs in our country has led me to conclude that the root of existing evils is . . . in the system. . . . "Everything's rotten—it has to be changed." I really did say that to Gorbachev on a winter evening in 1984 at Pitsunda, and I will not recant those words today.[2]

That Gorbachev associated himself with these sentiments was clear in his response to Shevardnadze's resignation at the Fourth USSR Congress of People's Deputies on December 20, 1990. Revealing that he had planned to nominate Shevardnadze to the post of vice president, Gorbachev stated:

This man [Shevardnadze] made his choice a long time ago on the point that we cannot go on living in the society we have been living in. Ten years ago, in the well-known situation of that time, he entered into opposition against certain forces. We knew this, and those who were close to him know all this very well.

[2]Eduard Shevardnadze, *The Future Belongs to Freedom,* New York, Free Press, 1991, p. 37.

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He, as well as I, working both at the local level and here, came to the conclusion that, even with the powers we had, we were unable to launch genuine processes of renewal. Life demanded that we go through all those ordeals and all those heated debates in order to come to the realization that we had to use the opportunity to begin changing everything in society.[3]

How much of this intent to change "everything in society" was made public by the troika along the way remains unclear, but at some point in the course of rapid and uncontrollable change, opponents of these developments apparently arrived at the conclusion that a "conspiracy" or "hidden agenda" existed, designed to transform the Soviet system, even if the price was to cripple the Soviet Union as a global power. The loss of Central and Eastern Europe and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact were viewed with considerable alarm by the Soviet military, since nowhere had these shifts been signaled in advance or discussed and debated. In this view, only "incompetence and ignorance," "hidden agendas," or "betrayal and treason" could account for the developments.

The quick alignment of the Soviet Union with the United States in the Gulf crisis further aroused the fury of many Soviet military professionals, who accused the government of betraying an ally in order to curry favor with the United States. American leadership in mobilizing the world against Iraq was viewed by Soviet military officials as a model of how the future *Pax Americana* was to operate: under the cover of United Nations resolutions, with NATO as the informal enforcement mechanism, and with the Soviet Union in tow. (Significant features of the model resurfaced at the Madrid Conference on the Middle East, where the Soviet presence seemed to be essentially a gesture of courtesy extended by President Bush. This conference may actually be the last hurrah of the Soviet Union as a unitary state.)

USSR Minister of Defense Dmitriy Yazov and other Soviet military spokesmen and political hard-liners publicly charged that the Gorbachev-Shevardnadze policies had left the USSR without allies, without a buffer zone, and with an unbalanced force structure because of the CFE (Conventional Forces in Europe) and proposed START (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) treaties, which the military not only opposed, but was in the process of flagrantly violating.[4] Valeriy Musatov, deputy head of the CPSU International Department, summarized the anti-Shevardnadze position thus:

The turn of events in Eastern Europe had a powerful negative influence on the broadest strata of Soviet society. They encouraged attacks by destructive forces on the CPSU, repeating the scenario played out in Eastern Europe. The collapse of the East European alliance coincided with separatist tendencies within the USSR. And the rather serious general psychological impact caused by the breakaway of our allies remains. . . . The forced and unprepared return to the motherland of the Soviet Union's most powerful group of forces and the liquidation of their military infrastructure in Eastern Europe caused negative feelings in military circles. The question of the security of our western borders remains.[5]

Supporters of the Shevardnadze line rebutted that the unification of Germany, the collapse of the alliance, and the loss of Eastern Europe were all inevitable, and that the changed international atmosphere and remaining Soviet nuclear capability were more than adequate surrogates for a huge, expensive conventional force and a string of dependent buffer states. In the words of political commentator Sergey Karaganov, "[w]ith today's highly mobile armed forces, greatly increased fire power, and nuclear weapons, a territorial buffer is far less valuable than it was 40 or even 50 years ago."[6] On Hungarian television, Shevardnadze defended his policies and denounced the former military reliance on buffer states as an example of "great power chauvinism," because it treated such states as "secondary peoples."[7]

A close reading of Shevardnadze's book reveals that the charge of incompetence, inexperience, and naïveté has considerable substance. The author candidly admits to not knowing where to start in changing Soviet foreign policy and to being in "the humiliating position of a student appointed as a leader over his masters" at the foreign ministry.[8] He further describes his feelings upon participating in his first important in-

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[3]*Izvestiya* (Moscow), Dec. 20, 1990.

[4]According to Shevardnadze, the military not only opposed the various treaties and agreements on the reduction of military forces, but also resorted to evasive and deceptive measures in its attempts to circumvent the treaties in violation of their provisions: "Speaking of tanks, when the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff hid thousands of them behind the Urals in circumvention of the Paris Charter, I lodged a protest with the President. . . . Sergey Akhromeyev submitted a memorandum completely justifying the move. My protest withered under the metallic gleam of his argument, along with my distress that the reduction of tanks was accomplished by deceitfully repainting them with Marine Infantry colors." Shevardnadze, op. cit., p. 214, also pp. 149–50 and 216.

[5]*Pravda* (Moscow), Mar. 13, 1991, as cited by Suzanne Crow, "Who Lost Eastern Europe?" Radio Liberty, *Report on the USSR* (Munich), Apr. 12, 1991, pp. 3–4.

[6]Moscow Central Television, July 5, 1990, as cited in ibid., p. 2.

[7]Hungarian Television, Mar. 22, 1991, as cited in ibid.

[8]Shevardnadze, op. cit., pp. 41–42.

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Mikhail Gorbachev and Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze exchange handshakes at the opening of the Warsaw Pact summit meeting on June 7, 1990, as Soviet defense minister Dmitriy Yazov looks on.

—Reuters/Bettmann.

ternational conference, the 10th anniversary of the Helsinki Agreement, held in Helsinki in July 1985:

The foreign ministers of 35 nations of Europe, the United States, and Canada gathered in the capital of Finland. . . . I was a novice among them, and the conference turned into a "coming out party" for the new Soviet foreign minister. Lively human interest showed through the expressions of official courtesy. I sensed sincere goodwill coming from my colleagues, along with an unconcealed desire to find out what kind of man had joined their circle so unexpectedly. I cannot say that I felt right at home under this scrutiny, but I was taking their measure too. . . . I tried to remove from my own eyes the ideological lenses that would make any representative of the West look like a crafty enemy. . . . "Watch out that they don't fool you or wrap you around their little finger." I was embarrassed by the long-entrenched stereotype of diplomacy, holding that any means, even deceit and fraud, may be used to achieve the necessary end. The mores of the Talleyrands and the Metternichs, even in their modern-day dress, did not square at all with the standard I wanted to uphold. I wanted my partners to trust me as I wanted to trust them.[9]

There is also much in Shevardnadze's book that suggests that his foreign policy was guided by a hidden agenda. He reveals that he told German foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher after the unification of Germany that he had come to the conclusion as early as 1986 that this development was inevitable,[10] a statement that smacks of a self-fulfilling prophecy rather than a "forecast." He makes similar comments with respect to the loss of Eastern Europe, the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, and the erosion of Soviet military power.

However, nowhere in his book or elsewhere does Shevardnadze reveal where, how, why, when, and by whom decisions were made. He repeatedly refers to "the leadership" or "we" in connection with various decisions and perceptions, but nowhere does he define

[9]Ibid., pp. 60–61.
[10]Ibid., pp. 131–32.

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whom this "we" or "leadership" signifies. These crucial decisions were not debated beforehand in the Congress of People's Deputies, the Supreme Soviet, or their subordinate bodies. Nor, complain critics, were these decisions and issues debated or discussed in the inner councils of the leadership. Rather, the coup-plotters maintain that they were repeatedly confronted with accomplished facts and giveaways made in negotiations with representatives of foreign states, without prior warning or discussion. (This inevitably reminds one of the very high-handed command-administrative system of decision-making criticized by Gorbachev and Shevardnadze, whereby a small handful of individuals had made the most critical decisions *in camera*, concealed even from the entire Politburo.)

Under these circumstances, within the Soviet context, one could reasonably charge that Soviet diplomacy under Shevardnadze was one unilateral concession and giveaway after another in return for empty Western "kudos" or illusory expectations of financial and economic aid, and that the Minister of Foreign Affairs was indeed deceived, defrauded, outwitted, and hoodwinked by crafty bourgeois diplomats.

The relevant criticism of the Shevardnadze-Gorbachev foreign policy relates not so much to its thrust as to the competence of Soviet negotiating behavior. If, indeed, what transpired was on the foreign policy agenda of Shevardnadze and Gorbachev, the Soviet bargaining position was strong in terms of what Moscow might have expected in return. Looking back at 1985, it is clear that the US and the West would have been prepared to give a great deal in exchange for the offerings on the Soviet foreign policy smorgasbord that materialized. Inept, inexperienced and naïve, overly self-assured and flattered Soviet negotiators were indeed outwitted.

It is no secret, as evidenced by the dismissals and purges in the Soviet foreign ministry after the coup, that a substantial number of the most senior, experienced Soviet diplomats shared the view of the coup-plotters that insofar as Soviet interests were concerned, the Shevardnadze-Gorbachev foreign policy was a disaster. Yel'tsin's opportunistic, if courageous, behavior in resisting both the Gorbachev policy and that of Gorbachev's conservative critics, combined with the extraordinarily incompetent and outright stupid calculations and behavior of the coup-plotters, ensured the inevitable collapse of the USSR as an integrated or composite international entity. One is almost tempted to praise the competence of Western and American diplomacy; clearly, it made no serious mistakes or blunders and exploited every opening and opportunity provided by Soviet diplomacy.

Controlling the Nuclear Arsenal

What does all this mean for Soviet foreign policy as the Union approaches its final days? Essentially, it will be marking time, accommodating the US, Western Europe, and Japan like a supplicant, hoping for handouts to keep it alive, and awaiting the creation and organization of separate republic diplomatic establishments. But, in the meantime, it becomes the main function —perhaps the last major mission—of Soviet foreign policy to prevent dispersal of control of the Soviet nuclear arsenal among the republics.

Its principal external crutch in this regard is the US, which currently would rather deal with a single entity (minus the three Baltic states) than summon up the energy and imagination to deal with 12 additional states. At times, it seems that in the United States and the rest of the world, the Soviet Union has effectively implanted the idea that the former Russian empire, reincarnated as the USSR, is a permanent integral entity, whose disintegration is to be mourned, if not arrested, rather than welcomed and encouraged.

More than nostalgia is involved in the Bush administration's solicitude for the integrity of the Soviet state (without which support the Union would probably collapse). By continuing to recognize the Union, and Gorbachev as its constitutional authority, the US is in a better position to manage intricate problems, such as who is to occupy the Soviet Union's seat on the Security Council and what to do with the Soviet nuclear arsenal. Certainly, one important determining consideration in the timing and nature of President Bush's unilateral decision to eliminate all tactical nuclear weapons on land and sea, as well as to undertake other denuclearizing measures, was the wish to keep Gorbachev afloat, to keep the Union in operation, and to get a handle on the nuclear problem before the Soviet Union broke up and its nuclear arsenal was dispersed among the various republics. Realistically anticipating that Gorbachev would respond in kind and perhaps even go beyond the Bush proposals, Washington hoped to establish irreversible ground rules on further denuclearization while the Soviet nuclear arsenal was still under Gorbachev's constitutional and operational control.

Russia's President Boris Yel'tsin quickly found common ground with Gorbachev on this issue, since Yel'tsin considers Russia to be the logical successor to the residual superpower status of the Soviet Union and intends to be its primary successor-state in the event of the Union's dissolution. In any event, even in a loose Union, Russia will be the dominant member and will be the new center. For this reason, Yel'tsin is interested in maintaining central control over nuclear weapons.

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The behavior of the other "nuclear" republics has been both ambiguous and ominous. At least three other republics—Ukraine, Belorussia, and Kazakhstan—have ICBM's on their soil, both in fixed silos and on mobile units. The latter can be, and are being, moved to the Russian republic, but the ones in fixed silos remain. The leaders of Ukraine and Kazakhstan have publicly, but not irrevocably, declared that as long as a "center" exists, they will recognize its authority over the nuclear weapons on their soil, but under no circumstances will they relinquish their weapons to the Russian republic.[11] What happens if the "center" disappears, they have not explained. Tactical and short-range nuclear weapons are even more widely dispersed, with the total number of all types of Soviet nuclear warheads numbering around 27,000. The logistical problem of collecting and destroying such a massive arsenal is immense and would require years, many more years than the Union itself is likely to survive—hence Washington's desire to keep the Union afloat as long as possible.

Under these circumstances, any agreement with Gorbachev on denuclearization is apt to be illusory: one cannot be sure that successor-states will honor it, although Ukraine has suggested that it, for one, will.[12] It is not to be excluded that republics will see nuclear weapons as useful bargaining levers at the very least and exotic symbols of independence and power in the international community as well. Moveover, nuclear weapons can be an effective deterrent against Russia, which has potential territorial claims against both Ukraine and Kazakhstan, whose territories together contain over 16 million ethnic Russians living in areas adjacent to the Russian republic.

The abortive coup in August 1991 seriously undermined Gorbachev's authority and all but shattered what remained of a functional central authority. The power and autonomy of Russian President Boris Yel'tsin correspondingly increased because of his courageous and successful defiance of the coup leaders. Gorbachev's authority having been undermined and Yel'tsin's enhanced, a sort of transitional duumvirate of Gorbachev and Yel'tsin has emerged. As Yel'tsin recognized that his quest for the autonomy of Russia threatened to shatter the Union, he joined forces with Gorbachev in an attempt to preserve the Union in some form—as a confederation or economic union. But this also conveyed to the other republics the specter of a new Union, in which Russia as an ethnic unit would be more dominant than it had been in the USSR, where the nexus of hegemony had been the Communist party, not Russia as a nation.

With the dissolution of the Union government by Gorbachev after the coup (virtually the entire Council of Ministers had been directly or indirectly involved in the conspiracy) and the vitiation of the Union parliament, Gorbachev's authority has shrunk to the point where it extends only over the defense ministry in his capacity as commander-in-chief and over foreign policy in his capacity as head-of-state—the sole recognized representative of the Union in the international community. Control over even these two areas was challenged and gradually eroded as some republics announced their intention to exchange diplomatic missions with foreign countries, request admission to the United Nations (Ukraine and Belorussia have been members since the organization was founded), or raise their own military forces. (Even as Gorbachev warned the various republics not to create their own armies, the Ukrainian parliament, in October 1991, under the direction of Leonid Kravchuk, authorized the republic to create its own army of 400,000. Whether it will claim a share of the Soviet Armed Forces as a foundation for such a force remained unclear, although the republic did lay claim to the Soviet Black Sea Fleet as the nucleus of a Ukrainian navy.) All of this is in flux, with no predictable outcomes, since the interest and capabilities of the various republics differ considerably and many are now subject to domestic pluralistic and factional divisions and pressures.

These developments explain Gorbachev's attempt to reconstitute a Union of some sort. Abortive "Unions" of 12, 10, 8, or fewer republics have been periodically projected, with Yel'tsin's backing, but with little success. When Gorbachev convened his new, reorganized, toothless Supreme Soviet in October 1991 to lay the foundations of a new loose Union of some sort, economic or other, only seven republics even bothered to send representatives. Half of this improvised Supreme Soviet consisted of delegates selected and sent by the seven participating republics, and the other half was made up of members of the old pre-coup Supreme Soviet, who were retained on the payroll and showed up to fill the chamber. The three Baltic republics, of course, were now independent—recognized as such by Moscow and the international community—and were already members of the United Nations. Ukraine was the

[11] On October 24, 1991, the Ukrainian parliament reaffirmed Ukraine's nonnuclear status and further clarified the republic's stand on the nuclear arsenal on its territory. In a statement broadcast by Radio Kiev on October 25, 1991, the republic stated that the presence of nuclear weapons on its territory was temporary, that they were under control of structures of the former USSR but Ukraine insisted on the right to control their nonuse, that Ukraine would abide by Soviet-American arms agreements and intended to adhere to the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, and that it would cooperate in the destruction of nuclear weapons. Reported in *Report on the USSR*, Nov. 1, 1991, pp. 15–16. See also *The New York Times*, Oct. 22, 23, and 25, and Nov. 12, 1991.

[12] *Report on the USSR*, Nov. 1, 1991, pp. 15–16.

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most conspicuous absentee. Aside from Ukraine, the republics of Georgia, Moldova, and Azerbaijan also refused to send representatives to the shrunken parliament. Later, much to the relief of both Yel'tsin and Gorbachev, Ukraine relented and agreed to join.[13]

However, the degree of Ukraine's adherence to the Union is fast shrinking. The December 1, 1991, referendum in Ukraine is expected to approve independence for the republic by a large majority. Simultaneously, a multicandidate election for an authentic executive-type president will be held, and it is anticipated that Kravchuk, currently president of the Ukrainian parliament, will be elected and automatically assume the position of commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian armed forces. The republic has already established a defense ministry and appointed a defense minister, who was given the rank of colonel-general by President Kravchuk. The parliament also authorized the expenditure of 28 percent of the budget (whose size remains indefinite) to raise and equip the military.[14]

It is expected that the Ukrainian military will be made up of professional officers and conscripts. At the same time, a "Republic Guard" or state militia of 30,000 was authorized, as was a smaller unit of border troops. The question of whether Ukraine will appropriate the equipment and installations of the Soviet military on its soil remains open, but should the republic attempt this, it may trigger a confrontation with Union forces, since Gorbachev and the Soviet Ministry of Defense have warned against such a move. (Alternatively, Ukraine may seek to acquire equipment, weapons, materiel, and uniforms from abroad.) On the other hand, the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs has agreed to allow a substantial part of its troops to be allocated to the republics.[15]

Ukrainian officials are cognizant of the concern the outside world feels with respect to the nuclear weapons on its soil. Republic policy is ambiguous and contradictory, probably reflecting controversy and lack of consensus. Despite the statement of Ukrainian officials that the republic will allow a central authority to control the weapons, the republic has refused to join any of the existing plans for a political or security Union. Kiev has also stated that it will not relinquish nuclear weapons to the Russian republic. Furthermore, Ukraine has been declared a "nuclear-free zone," whatever that may mean under existing circumstances.[16] The Ukrainian foreign minister, Anatoliy Zlenko, has stated that if current disarmament proposals were carried out, 130 of the 176 strategic weapons deployed in Ukraine could be safely destroyed, leaving 46 to be disposed of through further negotiations.[17]

One strategy in dealing with the question of nuclear weapons, especially ICBM's, in the republics of Belorussia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan would be a quick Soviet-American agreement, while Gorbachev still possesses constitutional authority and the defense ministry still retains operational and physical control of the weapons. An agreed-upon contingent of ICBM's would be reduced on both sides, with the Soviet complement including all of the ICBM's and other immediately removable nuclear weapons deployed in the non-Russian republics. Whether this strategy will be attempted or, if tried, succeed, remains dubious, even though the republics involved have stated their willingness to have their nuclear weapons destroyed in accordance with the provisions of a Soviet-American agreement. The longer this is delayed, the more likely it is that ambitious and demagogic local politicians might generate pressures to retain the weapons.

Before the August coup, the United States was worried about centralized control over the Soviet nuclear arsenal lest it fall into the hands of a right-wing regime; with the danger from the Right more or less a thing of the past, the new danger is perceived to be the possible dispersal of Soviet nuclear weapons. But the situation in the Soviet Union remains in flux and transition; events rather than deliberate policy continue to predominate, and these, by their very nature, are annoyingly impervious to rational analysis.

Adjusting to New Realities

As Gorbachev's authority wanes, the United States and the outside world must, at some point, decide when the authority of the residual Union to commit its parts is no longer viable, i.e., when agreements made with Gorbachev and the Union cease to have operational or even legal validity. Can Gorbachev commit or obligate the dissident republics, if they disagree with his decisions, and can the US expect such agreements to have legal force? And what, absent diplomatic contacts outside the framework of the Union, is the alterna-

[13]*The New York Times*, Oct. 18, 1991, on Ukraine's refusal to join; and ibid., Nov. 5, 1991, for its subsequent decision to join. Again, in mid-November, when seven republics agreed to a loose political union, Ukraine refused to commit itself until after the December 1, 1991, referendum on independence. See ibid., Nov. 15, 1991.

[14]For details, see ibid., Oct. 23 and 30, 1991.

[15]On November 3, the Ukrainian parliament approved laws transforming the interior ministry troops into a Ukrainian National Guard and taking direct control of the soldiers who patrol Ukraine's borders with Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. See *The Washington Post*, Nov. 15, 1991.

[16]See sources cited in fn. 11.

[17]Reported in *The New York Times*, Oct. 23, 1991.

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tive if some republics accept Gorbachev's international authority and others do not?

Various suggestions and proposals are being offered to invest existing consular establishments on republic territory with de facto diplomatic status and to establish such consulates in republics where they do not currently exist. Some republics, notably Russia and Ukraine, have gingerly dispatched their "foreign ministers" to various capitals either to make their presence known or to scout the possibility of establishing separate diplomatic contact. So far, most of the outside world has not been very receptive, preferring to deal with a Union entity.

But for all practical purposes, the USSR is now a disembodied international juridical abstraction, deprived of most of its physical and material existence. Gorbachev and the Union represent a state in a continuing process of disintegration, a process that has no visible, definitive termination point. In the meantime, Russia and Ukraine, among the republics, have become more active and intrusive in foreign affairs, stating bluntly and boldly that Gorbachev can represent them only in the broadest sense and only provisionally, whereas on concrete issues, such as the disposition of the Kurile Island in the case of Russia, foreign states must engage in direct negotiations with the relevant republic. Spokesmen for the Russian republic, junketing around the world, exercise little restraint in their expressions of contempt for Gorbachev and his claims to constitutional authority.

In turn, as power has gravitated to the Russian republic, stakes there have become higher and Yel'tsin had confronted problems inside Russia similar to those Gorbachev faced when the Union was the focus of authority. Various ethnic groups, such as the Muslim Chechen-Ingush, are clamoring for independence from Russia.[18] In some cases, proliferation of political identities assumed preposterous proportions as various, purely ethnic Russian regions within the Russian republic—e.g., the Soviet Far East and Cossack areas in the North Caucasus—express sentiments for a separate political existence. In the Soviet Far East, for example, where, after the Bolshevik Revolution, Lenin fabricated a fraudulent Far Eastern Republic as a buffer against Japan, local officials have suggested that such an independent republic would make considerable economic sense, since the region's economic hinterland is in the Far East and the Pacific Rim, not in Europe.

Future of Foreign Affairs Cadres

The authority and standing of the Soviet foreign ministry and its diplomatic corps were seriously compromised by the abortive August coup. When the coup failed, Shevardnadze's successor, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, was summarily dismissed for not opposing the plot with sufficient vigor.[19] He was replaced by a relative unknown, Boris Pankin, whose main virtue was that he was the most prominent diplomat (he had been Ambassador to Czechoslovakia at the time) to publicly denounce and dissociate himself from the coup-leaders. Under Pankin, the foreign ministry is being reformed and purged once again (Shevardnadze effected his own shakeup of the ministry). More than a dozen sitting ambassadors have been publicly criticized for their behavior or failure to act during the coup, including those to the United States (Viktor Komplektov), France (Yuriy Dubinin), Britain (Leonid Zamyatin), and Germany (Vladislav Terekhov), and six, including the last three mentioned, were formally recalled. In the central ministry apparatus, the veteran arms control negotiator and former ambassador to Germany, Yuliy Kvitsinskiy, was also dismissed from his position as a first deputy foreign minister.

Although 8,000 foreign ministry officials signed a petition requesting that Shevardnadze be returned as foreign minister,[20] it is not clear if Shevardnadze set unacceptable conditions for his return, refused outright to serve under Gorbachev, or was not accepted by Gorbachev. Reformers within the ministry demanded a purge of Communist party influence in the ministry as an institution, but it is not clear whom that would leave in the ministry.

As individual republics assume greater visibility on the international scene, with high republic officials visiting foreign capitals and heads of states and governments and receiving them in their own capitals, how long can the Soviet foreign ministry pretend that it speaks for all 13 different entities—the Union and 12 republics? Will there be one policy and 13 separate implementations, or 13 policies and a single execution, or 13 policies and 13 executions operating simultaneously in harmony and contradiction? Under these conditions, can a central foreign ministry function even as a coordinating vehicle?[21]

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[18]Ibid., Nov. 12, 1991.

[19]See Sally Wise, "Foreign Ministry Adrift," *Report on the USSR*, Sept. 6, 1991, for details describing Bessmertnykh's equivocating and vacillating behavior during the coup.

[20]Crow, loc. cit., p. 9. Shevardnadze is reported to have retorted, "Who needs a minister when there is no Union?"

[21]Although Ukraine has agreed to assume a proportionate share of the Union's foreign debt, Ukrainian Prime Minister Vitold Fokin has demanded that Moscow refrain from incurring further foreign financial debt without consulting the republics as to how borrowed money is to be distributed and who will be obligated to repay financial debts. See *Report on the USSR*, Oct. 4, 1991, p. 36, and Oct. 11, 1991, p. 36.

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Various spokesmen of the Soviet foreign ministry talk expansively about greater participation of the republics in the formulation and execution of Soviet foreign policy. Yet, this problem does not hold the same priority for all 12 republics. For some republics, in Central Asia for example, foreign policy questions have very low priority, whereas for the Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian, and Armenian republics, foreign policy questions are crucial. The latter republics are fashioning their own foreign policies. However, for virtually all republics, the questions of the domestic economic and financial order as well as the relations with one another, either collectively or bilaterally, are more important than foreign policy and must be resolved first before foreign policy questions are addressed.

There have been a number of institutional, structural, and personnel rearrangements made within the foreign ministry in order to accommodate the participation of the republics,[22] but most of these actions appear to be improvisations upon improvisations as the situation changes constantly. Instead, as the viability of the Union and its international credibility and juridical capacity to represent and legally commit the various parts of the USSR dissolve and the republics increasingly flex their international muscles, panic is rampant in the foreign ministry and is sweeping through the diplomatic service stationed abroad.

The Russian foreign minister, Andrey Kozyrev, a young former Soviet diplomat, has apparently been instructed by Yel'tsin to demand that the Union foreign ministry reduce its personnel by 90 percent, whereas Soviet foreign minister Pankin proposed instead a 40 percent reduction in force and greater participation of republic representatives in the service. Should Kozyrev's demands prevail, thousands of experienced Soviet diplomats may soon be unemployed along with an estimated 50,000 or so other central ministry officials (assuming Yel'tsin's demand that some 70 central ministries be shut down is met).

It is expected that many of the experienced diplomats, if they are relatively young and malleable, may become servants of the various republics, with the bulk of the current diplomatic service being coopted by the Russian republic once it succeeds in replacing the center. According to Soviet diplomatic sources, the outlook for foreign ministry personnel over 60 years of age, with a few exceptions, is particularly bleak, since they are not apt to be retained or find diplomatic berths elsewhere. The issue also arises as to which future political entity will be responsible for the pensions of retired Union foreign affairs officials.

It is not even assured that diplomats who are ethnic nationals of various republics will be invited to join republic diplomatic services, since the republics may wish to use diplomatic posts as patronage rewards for the politically loyal and deserving. Republics may also sprinkle their foreign policy establishments with recruits from their respective diasporas outside the Soviet Union. The Armenian republic, for example, has passed over experienced Soviet diplomats of Armenian origin to appoint a young, American-born, American-Armenian lawyer, Rafik Hovannisian, as its foreign minister, anticipating no doubt, that such an appointment would provide an invaluable conduit to the United States and the American-Armenian community—the largest, wealthiest, and most influential Armenian diaspora in the world. One might expect similar developments in the Baltic states and Ukraine.

Republics as International Actors

The Russian and Ukrainian republics have been the most assertive in staking out their separate positions in international affairs. Unlike Russia, Ukraine already has a quasi-international identity and status as a member of the United Nations and its affiliated and associated international organizations. It has also been a party to various international treaties and agreements connected with the postwar peace treaties and the United Nations. Hence, it already has an international juridical base to build upon (this is also true of Belorussia, but that republic's lust for independence is far from robust at this point). Ukraine has recently entered into a treaty with Poland. (Belorussia has ties with both Poland and Lithuania.) It has also made contact with Western diplomatic circles regarding the republic's adherence to the CFE treaty.[23]

Although Russia does not possess a separate international juridical identity per se, having been supplanted historically by the USSR, it is likely to turn the tables and claim the Soviet Union's permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Yelt'sin is under intense pressure to move swiftly and declare Russia to be the USSR's successor-state in order to lay first claim on its international political assets and domestic assets with international political ramifications, such as the nuclear arsenal. The unreadiness of the US and Western Europe to welcome such a move is probably the main deterrent.

Domestically, all indications are that Russia intends

[22]See Jan S. Adams, "New Structures at the USSR Foreign Ministry," ibid., Oct. 4, 1991, pp. 10–13.

[23]See *The Washington Post*, Nov. 15, 1991.

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to become a plenipotentiary state. It will not function within any larger association (confederation or federation) as simply an equal or a "first among equals," but rather will play the role of a major power in relation to the other republics. With respect to the non-Russian ethnic units within the Russian republic, the current intention is to retain them and not allow them to exercise self-determination and independence. This has already resulted in considerable anxiety and restiveness in Yakutia, Tataria, and in the North Caucasus region, where the struggle against Russian hegemony is as strong as in some of the republics. (Yel'tsin's proposal to insert Soviet troops in the Chechen-Ingush region to suppress separatist tendencies among the local populace brought a rebuke from his own parliament.)[24]

Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia are already members of the UN; they have retrieved their former international identity and are in the process of creating their diplomatic establishments. Georgia and Moldova have also declared their independence and invited international recognition. They have recognized one another, and have gained recognition from Romania. Moldova has also concluded a trade agreement with Burundi, although both countries are landlocked.

Thus, as the world bids adieu to Soviet foreign policy, it can say hello (once again) to Russian foreign policy as well as to the foreign policies of new members of the international community (not to mention the three Baltic states). This may render relating to this part of the world somewhat more complex and perhaps even unnerving, but it will provide sufficient interest and uncertainty to ensure that reams of analysis and commentary will be churned out by scholars, think-tank analysts, journalists, and even intelligence services for many years to come.

[24] *The New York Times*, Nov. 12, 1991.

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The Politics of Georgia's Independence

Darrell Slider

Georgia was the second republic, after Lithuania, to declare independence from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (in April 1991), and since the August 1991 coup in Moscow, it has—like the Baltic states and Moldova—steadfastly refused to join in any reconstituted Union. National self-assertion by Georgians has a long history, and when its latest surge occurred at the end of the 1980's, it swamped a Communist regime that attempted futilely to stem or ride the tide. The government of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, which in October 1990 was voted in to replace the Communists, faces the daunting tasks of uniting a fractured noncommunist political elite, managing an economy that is dependent on other republics, and dealing with aggravated sensitivities among Georgia's ethnic minorities, who fear that Georgians will dominate them once independence is achieved.

The politics of the Soviet republics took on a significance in 1990 and 1991 that would have been unthinkable even a few years ago. As a result of electoral victories in 1990, opposition movements took power in seven republics, including Georgia, and even Communist-led governments in other republics took advantage of the new situation to seek greater independence from Moscow. But the central bureaucracy continued to control most republic affairs, including management of the economy, as well as the police and army. In order to exercise their newly won authority, republic leaders found it necessary to struggle with central Soviet authorities over the delimitation of central and republic powers—in what has been termed the "war of laws." This led republic parliaments to pass laws on sovereignty that asserted republic rights. Without the acquiescence of the center, however, it was difficult to implement republic sovereignty.

The strategies chosen by republic leaders to find a way out of this stalemate differed markedly. Lithuania directly challenged the center with its declaration of independence in March 1990. Five other republics—Estonia, Latvia, Moldova, Armenia, and Georgia—also sought independence and declared they would neither participate in negotiations over a new Union treaty nor sign such a treaty.[1] The other republics, including Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan, sought a legal mechanism for reallocating powers by negotiating a new Union treaty with Gorbachev and the central authorities.

Yet, even this last approach seemed too radical to the plotters behind the August 19, 1991, coup in Moscow. They sought to prevent the signing of what appeared to be the final version of this agreement, worked out between republic leaders and Gorbachev at Novo-Ogarevo in the summer. In the minds of the coup organizers, the treaty—commonly called the "nine plus one" agreement—went too far in ceding rights to the republics and would have led to the breakup of the Soviet Union.

However, the coup had the effect of solidifying oppo-

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[1] In the aftermath of the August 1991 coup, Armenia left this group and agreed to sign the new treaty, which ceded considerably more powers to the republics.

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sition in the republics to all central institutions, and Estonia and Latvia rapidly adopted declarations of independence while the coup was in progress. After the coup collapsed on August 21, it became clear that Gorbachev and other central authorities could no longer prevent republics from achieving independence. International recognition of Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia was swift. Most other republics, including Ukraine, Belorussia, Moldova, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan, declared independence. When a new agreement was worked out between Gorbachev and the leaders of some republics, Akaki Asatiani, chairman of the Georgian Supreme Soviet, along with representatives of Moldova and the three Baltic states, refused to sign.[2]

What is extraordinary about Georgia is the extent to which the republic had already achieved de facto independence by the spring of 1991, in spite of the fact that it was the last of the republics to hold free, multicandidate parliamentary elections. These elections took place at the end of October 1990 and brought to power the Round Table bloc of parties headed by the popular long-time dissident Zviad Gamsakhurdia. By April 1991, the new leadership had already neutralized or replaced much of the center's control over Georgia's internal and external affairs.

Georgia was also the first republic in which the Communist party virtually disappeared as an organization. Party membership fell rapidly over the course of 1989 and 1990, and many prominent members quit the party at the time of the October 1990 elections. Most of the party's property was confiscated by the newly elected government with hardly a struggle. The party press was largely taken over by the parliament, and the lavish structure that had housed the Central Committee was turned over to the new government.[3] When the new Communist party first secretary ran for president in May 1991, he received only 1.7 percent of the vote, and when the formal dissolution of the party took place after the August coup, it was an event hardly worth noting.

Emergence of an Opposition

Possessing an ancient culture and a rich language, Georgians (or Kartvelians, as the Georgians call themselves) maintained a strong sense of national identity, despite the fact that Georgian territory has frequently been divided into various kingdoms or occupied by foreign powers. In 1801, tsarist Russia, which in 1783 had signed a treaty establishing an "alliance" with Georgia, annexed that state and abolished the Georgian monarchy. The collapse of the tsarist empire allowed Georgia's Menshevik government to declare independence, in March 1918, but this government was crushed by the Red Army in February 1921.[4]

In the ensuing years, Georgia had a reputation as one of the most nationalistic of the Soviet republics. Tbilisi, the capital of modern Georgia, was the site of two of the most significant ethnic protests in the post-Stalin, pre-*perestroyka* era. In 1956, a demonstration against de-Stalinization quickly escalated into a drive for independence that Khrushchev brutally suppressed with Soviet tanks. At the 28th CPSU Party Congress in 1990, Eduard Shevardnadze—who was Georgian party first secretary from 1972 until tapped by Gorbachev to be foreign minister in 1985—disclosed that around 150 young people had been killed in the attack (other Georgian sources put the total number of deaths at about 300).[5] A second demonstration, which took place in 1978 and involved thousands of participants, was called in support of preserving the primacy of Georgian as the official language of the republic. This time, despite the presence of Soviet tanks, the protest was peaceful *and* successful. At least in the constitution, Georgian remained the only state language (in practice, Russian was used extensively in official business within the republic).

Protests involving thousands of people do not occur spontaneously. There were several small dissident groups active in Georgia in the 1970's and 1980's. Centered among students and the intelligentsia, they sought to protest the adverse impact of Soviet policies in Georgia. In addition to language issues, they were concerned with conserving ancient monuments (of which there are thousands in Georgia), preserving Georgian Orthodoxy (which is separate from Russian Orthodoxy), protecting the environment, and upholding the rights of Georgians living in the republic's territorial enclaves of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as well as in the neighboring union republic of Azerbaijan. The

[2]Asatiani did, however, participate in the meeting where the new treaty was worked out. See speech by Akaki Asatiani at the USSR Congress of People's Deputies on September 3, 1991, as carried in *Svobodnaya Gruziya* (Tbilisi), Sept. 4, 1991. According to CNN, Russian Prime Minister Ivan Silayev reported that all 15 republics participated in the discussions.

[3]The building was constructed in the 1970's during Eduard Shevardnadze's period as party first secretary. It included a private elevator to Shevardnadze's office on the top floor. The Central Committee was forced to take over the much less luxurious facilities occupied by the Tbilisi city party committee.

[4]For Western accounts of the history of modern Georgia, see David Marshall Lang, *A Modern History of Soviet Georgia*, New York, Grove Press, 1962; and Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, Bloomington, IN, and Stanford, CA, Indiana University Press and Hoover Institution Press, 1988.

[5]*Pravda* (Moscow), July 11, 1990. Public discussion of the events surrounding the March 9, 1956, uprising was prohibited until 1990. Several interviews with eyewitnesses were published in *Zarya Vostoka* (Tbilisi), Mar. 14, 1990.

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local communist government dealt harshly with these groups, trying and imprisoning most of their leaders on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation." One of the most active dissidents was Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who was first arrested and imprisoned in 1956. The son of one of the most famous Georgian writers, Konstantine Gamsakhurdia, he was one of the organizers of the Georgian Helsinki Watch Group in the mid-1970's. For these activities, he was again arrested in 1977; he was pardoned in 1979 after a televised admission of guilt.[6]

In a number of Soviet republics, particularly those in the Baltic, the Gorbachev era saw the emergence of broadly based informal groups that usually adopted the "popular front" format and even included, in some cases, significant participation by reformist members of the republic Communist party. However, in Georgia under Dzhumber Patiashvili, who was party first secretary from 1985 to 1989, attempts to form such groups were suppressed.[7] In general, Georgia was isolated from the *glasnost'* in the media and the tolerance of political diversity introduced by Gorbachev. The Georgian regime applied the usual methods of KGB harassment, and denied opposition figures access to the media. It was not until June 1989 that a Popular Front of Georgia held its founding congress. The group never took on the central role in organizing opposition activities that popular fronts in other republics performed.

The Georgian Communist leadership further attempted to preempt the rise of a consolidated oppositional nationalist movement by creating an alternative organization, the Rustaveli Society, in 1987. The activities of the Rustaveli Society were at first mostly limited to the sphere of promoting and defending Georgian culture, and it was headed by an establishment poet with little taste for reform or *glasnost'*.

In this period, the Georgian opposition movement consisted mostly of small radical anticommunist groups, the leaders of which were often at odds with one another, more for tactical and personal reasons than for matters of principle. Cut off from public discourse, the opposition groups were forced to create underground organizations that in turn orchestrated street demonstrations. Patiashvili saw himself as besieged by extremists trying to provoke mass disorder and overthrow the Communist regime. When, in November 1988, the opposition staged a hunger strike

[6]For background on Gamsakhurdia, see Elizabeth Fuller, "Georgian Press Launches New Attack on Noted Dissident," *Radio Liberty Research* (Munich), No. 114, Mar. 10, 1988. Gamsakhurdia's "confession" was heavily edited, and he argues that his words were distorted to make it appear that he was renouncing all previous dissident activities.

[7]For an early review of opposition groups, see Elizabeth Fuller, "Independent Political Groupings in Georgia," Ibid., No. 527, Nov. 25, 1988.

Mourners carry the coffins of victims of the April 9, 1989, attack by Soviet troops against unarmed Georgian demonstrators in Tbilisi.

—I. Shlamov/TASS from Sovfoto.

and round-the-clock demonstrations in front of Tbilisi's government building to demand revision of the Soviet constitution, Patiashvili asked Moscow's permission to use force to break up the demonstration.[8] When Moscow—principally Gorbachev and Shevardnadze—refused, a peaceful resolution of the crisis was found through negotiations with the demonstrators. Five months later, a more violent response to a similar demonstration had fateful consequences.

April 1989—A Turning Point

On April 4, 1989, a demonstration began outside the government building protesting recent appeals made by Abkhaz leaders to Moscow for the right to declare self-determination for the Abkhaz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. (Ultimately, such a declaration might mean secession from Georgia against the wishes of local Georgians, who make up the largest group of the population in Abkhazia.) True to form, Patiashvili chose not to meet with or address the demonstrators. Instead, he again asked for military support from the

[8]Based on disclosures by Anatoliy Luk'yanov to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, *Izvestiya* (Moscow), June 3, 1989.

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center. This time, Gorbachev and Shevardnadze were abroad, and Yegor Ligachev was apparently running the show in Moscow. Although it is not clear whether or not he first consulted with Gorbachev on the matter, Ligachev apparently authorized the dispatch to Tbilisi of special troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, army paratroopers, and other forces, all under the command of the Transcaucasian military region chief, Col.-Gen. Igor' Rodionov.

In the early hours of April 9, tanks, armored personnel carriers, and soldiers wielding field shovels moved against the demonstrators, many of whom could not escape because troops had sealed off the side streets. Gas canisters were launched against the crowd and employed by troops at close range. The operation resulted in the deaths of 20 Georgians, mostly women and children, and hundreds were hospitalized. Martial law was immediately imposed, and tanks set up roadblocks throughout the city. Leaders of opposition groups who had been active in organizing the protests, including Gamsakhurdia, Merab Kostava, Irakli Tsereteli, and Gia Chanturia, were arrested.

The April 9 "tragedy," as it came to be called, had a searing effect on Georgian public opinion. The republic leadership lost what authority it had enjoyed in the eyes of Georgians, and support for independence became overwhelming—developments confirmed by polls initiated by the Communist leadership itself. One survey found that 89 percent of the respondents favored "real independence" for Georgia, in part reflecting the view (held by 81 percent) that much of the responsibility for the massacre lay with the central party leadership in Moscow. After the April events, the republic party leadership was viewed negatively by 71 percent, while 79 percent of the respondents felt that opposition groups expressed the genuine interests of the nation.[9]

Resentment toward Moscow and the Soviet military presence reached a level probably not experienced since Khrushchev sent tanks to Tbilisi to crush the 1956 nationalist demonstration. These feelings were compounded by the gloss put on the Tbilisi events by the Moscow-based media in the weeks after April 9. The Soviet press outside of Georgia was full of justifications for the actions by the Soviet forces, and laid responsibility for the events on Georgian radicals (routinely described as "anti-Soviet" and anti-Russian) and on the victims themselves. Even after eyewitness accounts began to appear and the results of medical experts became known,[10] the Soviet military consistently defended its actions. At first, the army refused to admit that it had used gas against the demonstrators, and thus would not release to doctors information about the composition of the gas, which was essential for the treatment of the victims. It was later determined that the nerve gas CS was employed, and its use in high concentrations may have caused the deaths of many of the victims.[11]

Gorbachev dispatched Shevardnadze, as well as the CPSU Central Committee's secretary responsible for personnel matters, Georgiy Razumovskiy, to the republic to try to calm the outrage among Georgians, particularly the intelligentsia, as well as to make significant changes in the republic's leadership. At an April 14 meeting of the Georgian party Central Committee, Patiashvili was removed along with second secretary Boris Nikol'skiy and the recently elected chairman of the Council of Ministers, Zurab Chkheidze.[12] Chosen as first secretary was Givi Gumbaridze, a Shevardnadze protégé, whose most recent position had been chairman of the republic's KGB, a post he had held only a few months.[13] His career had been primarily in party work, including several years as the head of Georgian Central Committee departments supervising the police and personnel under Patiashvili.[14] The new second secretary, traditionally a Russian who served as Moscow's "watchdog," was Aleksandr Pavshentsev. In this case, the nominee was from a Russian family that had lived in Georgia for three generations, and he had spent his entire career in the republic.[15]

Where Patiashvili largely suppressed the Georgian

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[9]See the report by Elgudzha Menabdishvili, of the Central Committee's Center for the Study of Public Opinion, "Public Opinion on the Consequences of the April Tragedy," *Kommunist Gruzii* (Tbilisi), No. 12, December 1989, pp. 77–81, as well as polling data presented in the report of the Georgian Supreme Soviet on the April events, *Zarya Vostoka*, Oct. 5, 1989.

[10]One eyewitness to the events of April 9 was a correspondent for Moscow's *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Yuriy Rost. His report and photographs were rejected for publication in his own newspaper, and they appeared instead in *Molodezh' Gruzii*, the Georgian Youth League's Tbilisi newspaper, on April 13. Russian military authorities in Tbilisi banned that issue of the paper, though it was received by some subscribers. It was the first objective account of what actually occurred on the square. Later, videotapes—including one reportedly made by the Georgian KGB—were shown on local and Soviet national television to document the event.

[11]Preliminary findings of the first official Georgian investigation of the April 9 tragedy were presented in *Zarya Vostoka*, June 11, 1989. Details about the use of nerve gas were announced in ibid., May 7, 1989.

[12]Ibid., Apr. 15, 1989.

[13]When Gumbaridze was appointed in December 1988, he replaced A. Inauri, who had headed the Georgian KGB since 1954. Gumbaridze was from Lanchkhuti, a small town in western Georgia that was home to the Shevardnadze clan. According to widely circulated reports, Gumbaridze is a distant cousin of Shevardnadze. The evidence for this was a note of condolence in a local newspaper signed by Gumbaridze on the occasion of the death of one of Shevardnadze's relatives. In this note, Gumbaridze was identified as a relative of the deceased.

[14]See *Zarya Vostoka*, Apr. 15, 1989. Gumbaridze was born in 1945 and educated at Tbilisi University. In 1983, he became a *rayon* first secretary under Shevardnadze, and then headed the administrative organs and organizational party work departments under Patiashvili. In May 1988, he was named first secretary of the Tbilisi city party committee (*gorkom*).

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surge toward independence, Gumbaridze chose, or felt compelled, to come to terms with it. However, despite efforts by the party to re-orient itself, shifts in popular attitudes quickly marginalized it as a force in Georgian politics. A national poll conducted in November and December 1989 by the All-Union Center for the Study of Public Opinion and several American scholars found that of all Soviet ethnic groups surveyed, Georgians had the lowest opinion of the Communist party: 42 percent said that the party never makes decisions in the public interest, while nationwide this attitude was expressed by only 18 percent of the population.[16]

Such negative public opinion forced the Georgian Communist party to compromise with opposition forces and introduce internal reform. In February 1990, the party released what amounted to a draft program (though it was not labeled as such) entitled the "Conception of the National Development of the Georgian SSR."[17] This document incorporated many of the proposals made by unofficial groups. It called for complete political, economic, and cultural self-determination. Any interference by what was referred to as "an outside power" in the internal affairs of the republic or of its subordinate political formations was not to be permitted.

The program called first for a new Union agreement that would grant "full sovereignty" to members and only a limited role for the center in defense, foreign policy, and the solution of "problems most important to the whole country." The program spoke vaguely of a "step-by-step transition" to "higher, more perfect forms of government"—presumably meaning independence. In economic matters, all property in Georgia would be owned—or distributed in the form of private or other types of property—by the republic, and there would be no place for "all-Union" property owned by Moscow.[18] The new program also called for greater sovereignty in the sphere of defense and foreign policy, including diplomatic representation in foreign countries and steps toward eventual membership in the United Nations. Finally, it reiterated the opposition's calls for the creation of republic-level military units.

The new Communist party leadership sought to create a dialogue with dissenting opposition groups. It released opposition leaders, and starting in the summer of 1989, they gained access to television and the print media. In recognition of his enormous popularity and potential influence, Gamsakhurdia was brought into negotiations with Gumbaridze over impending legislation in the republic Supreme Soviet. While this body was essentially conservative, having been elected under the old system, it quickly saw the writing on the wall and began adopting a number of measures demanded by opposition forces. It can be assumed that this all occurred at the urging of Gumbaridze with the support of the nationalist opposition.[19]

Of particular importance to the republic's progress toward independence was the June 1989 creation by the Presidium of the Georgian Supreme Soviet of a commission "On Questions of the Political and Legal Evaluation of the Violation of the Treaty of May 7, 1920, between Georgia and Soviet Russia." This treaty, signed by Lenin, had recognized the independent Menshevik government of Georgia that was formed in 1918. In November 1989, the Georgian Supreme Soviet approved the findings of the commission that the 1920 treaty had, indeed, been violated as a result of the actions of the Red Army, which "crudely violated the international legal status of an independent and sovereign republic."[20]

Further steps toward Georgian sovereignty were taken in early 1990. On March 8, a massive demonstration in front of the government building in Tbilisi protested the decision by the USSR Supreme Soviet to give new presidential powers to Gorbachev. The gathering also demanded an official republic declaration that Georgia was an occupied and illegally annexed country.[21] The next day, the republic parliament bowed to these demands and declared illegal and invalid the 1921 and 1922 agreements establishing Soviet control in Georgia after the Red Army invaded. In essence, the Georgian decision attempted to create the same sort of legal basis for independence that the Baltic republics had sought through the nullification of the Molotov-Ribben-

[15]Pavshentsev, born in Tbilisi in 1944, was educated at the Georgian Polytechnical Institute and worked in the party apparatus from 1975 (in the Tbilisi *gorkom* and Georgian Central Committee construction department); two of his most recent posts—first secretary of a Tbilisi *rayon* party committee and Tbilisi *gorkom* secretary—demand a virtually fluent knowledge of Georgian. Pavshentsev's biography appeared in *Zarya Vostoka*, June 18, 1989, and he described his family history in an interview in ibid., Sept. 29, 1990.

[16]The initiator of the poll on the American side was Ellen Mickiewicz of Emory University; data presented here were reported in a news release issued by Emory, March 28, 1990. The wording of the question did not give respondents the option to differentiate between the all-Union and the local communist parties.

[17]The text of the program appeared in *Zarya Vostoka*, Feb. 21, 1990.

[18]A partial exception was made for defense enterprises, which, while under republic jurisdiction, could still be managed by the central government "on a contract basis."

[19]Gumbaridze won the grudging respect of several opposition leaders who dealt with him on a regular basis. In interviews with this author, they described him as a clever tactician who often advanced unexpected arguments or proposals to soften the impact of measures favored by the opposition.

[20]*Zarya Vostoka*, Nov. 29, 1989.

[21]A photograph and brief report on the demonstration appeared in *Zarya Vostoka*, Mar. 10, 1990.

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trop Pact and the resurrection of previous agreements recognizing the sovereignty of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

In this period, too, the Communist Party of Georgia began the crucial process of depoliticization of institutions throughout the republic. Traditionally, the Communist party group within each Soviet political, economic, and social institution constituted a parallel decision-making body that was closely integrated with (and often supplanted) the formal structure of management. Political reform and the shift to a multiparty system were impossible unless the party agreed to give up its "leading role" at all levels of the system. Initial steps in this direction took place in March 1990, when the party committees as well as the Komsomol (the Communist Youth League) committees at Tbilisi University and other institutions of higher education announced that they were disbanding.[22] In April, the party organization in the apparatus of the republic trade union council agreed to disband upon the conclusion of the Georgian party congress scheduled for May.[23] (After the October 1990 elections, the new government effectively dismantled party structures in the police and legal system.)

In an attempt to halt the disintegration of the party, its leaders sought greater organizational autonomy from the center (a path already taken by Baltic communist parties). At a January 1990 party plenum, Gumbaridze announced that the party would move up its next congress to May 1990 and that among the items on the agenda would be reconsideration of the status of the Georgian Communist party. In his speech, he called for "self-determination" for the party in order to respond to peculiarly Georgian problems and to keep in touch with public opinion.[24] The republic party congress convened in May 1990, but as a result of deep divisions over the party's future course, its conclusion was postponed until later in the year.[25]

Other institutions in Georgia closely associated with Soviet rule were moving faster than the Communists in dissociating themselves from Moscow in an attempt to reestablish a modicum of authority in the new, radical political atmosphere. In February 1990, the Georgian sports association announced that its teams would no longer compete in the Soviet soccer league or in the USSR championship games. Georgia held its own championship series and hoped to send a team to compete internationally.[26] Gamsakhurdia gave opening remarks at the ceremonies inaugurating the independent republic games.[27]

Gamsakhurdia also played a prominent role in decisions by a number of other Georgian institutions to break their ties with Moscow, often by appearing at high-level meetings of their leadership organs. Gamsakhurdia's organization, the Round Table, soon had large numbers of adherents in almost all Georgian institutions. One of the early examples was the Georgian trade union organization, which reconstituted itself as a confederation independent of the all-Union trade union organization. The republic Komsomol went through perhaps the most thorough upheaval. A special congress was held in late March 1990 that came close to announcing the organization's self-liquidation. At the very least, it decided to declare independence from the Communist party and from the all-Union Komsomol, and after the congress, members began a serious effort to replace the organization with a "Movement of the Free Youth of Georgia." The congress closed down the councils governing the children's youth group (the Pioneers) at all levels and set a deadline of June 1 for Komsomol members and organizations to determine their role in any future youth organization.[28] Ultimately, new youth groups were formed, often oriented toward setting up money-making operations in trade, tourism, and publishing. The Komsomol as such was dissolved, and rival groups fought over the disposition of its assets.[29]

Contested Elections

Elections to the republic Supreme Soviet, originally scheduled for March 25, 1990, accelerated the down-

[22]This decision was reported in *Komsomol'skaya Pravda* (Moscow), Mar. 10, 1990.

[23]*Zarya Vostoka*, Apr. 18, 1990.

[24]The speech was published in ibid., Feb. 6, 1990.

[25]By the time it reconvened, on December 7, fully 235 of the 728 delegates did not return, and 66 others had already quit the party. A relative unknown, Avtandil Margiani, a *rayon* party leader from Gardabani, was chosen first secretary from a field of three candidates, and the party belatedly broke with the CPSU. A brief report on the congress appeared in *Zarya Vostoka*, Dec. 8, 1990.

After initially denying charges that the party continued to receive substantial funding from Moscow, Margiani soon resigned his post, stating that the Communist party had discredited itself. See *Komsomol'skaya Pravda*, Feb. 20, 1991.

[26]Soccer is by far the most popular sport in Georgia (Dinamo stadium holds 80,000 spectators and regularly sells out), and two teams were represented in the highest level of competition (Dinamo Tbilisi—now called Iberia—and Guria). Georgians have traditionally produced the best teams in Soviet soccer, though in recent years their teams have not been competitive. Georgian players have played an important role on all-star teams assembled to compete internationally. Two of the best players reportedly hoped to continue to play on the USSR all-star team by moving to Kiev. See *Izvestiya*, Feb. 23, 1990; *Rabochaya Tribuna* (Moscow), Mar. 3, 1990; and *Moscow News*, April 9–15, 1990.

[27]See *Zarya Vostoka*, Mar. 31, 1990.

[28]Ibid., Mar. 23, 1990.

[29]The assets included a large resort and conference complex outside of Tbilisi, built in part with all-Union Komsomol funding, formerly called Boris Dzneladze Komsomol City. Squatters took over what had formerly been hotel rooms at the complex.

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fall of the local Communist party. They also brought into the open serious divisions among opposition forces.

Spurred by the events of 1989 and 1990, the so-called informal groups rapidly transformed themselves into political parties, often organized around a single prominent individual. The groups ranged in orientation from monarchists, who sought the restoration of the Georgian royal family (now residing in Spain), to a Georgian Green party, to a group that called itself the "Stalin" party. The Social Democratic Party laid claim to the legacy of the Mensheviks who had led Georgia in the independence period from 1918 to 1921. The Progressive Democratic Party was made up largely of private entrepreneurs and chairmen of cooperatives. Broad-based social and cultural organizations—such as the Rustaveli Society, now reformed and politicized under the leadership of Akaki Bakradze, and the Popular Front, led by Nodar Natadze—also became political parties. However, superimposed on organizational and programmatic differences were long-standing personal rivalries among the leaders of various groups that caused even parties with common goals to split.

A major fissure developed among the new parties over their attitudes toward the elections to the Georgian Supreme Soviet. By the end of the preparations for the elections, approximately 2,300 candidates were vying for 300 seats. Many in the opposition resented the fact that fully one-third of the candidates consisted of enterprise or farm managers, a group firmly entrenched in the Communist party *nomenklatura*.[30] Some of the most radical groups began calling for a boycott of the elections to the republic's Supreme Soviet, arguing that an entirely new legislative body should be created.

The Popular Front and other moderate groups that had been prepared to participate also began to take a more radical view of the elections. The Popular Front met and urged the republic Supreme Soviet to postpone the election and make changes in the election law to allow for a truly multiparty election.[31] Five days prior to the elections, the Georgian Supreme Soviet bowed to pressure and decided to postpone the elections until the fall. At the same session, the Georgian parliament followed Gorbachev's initiative and formally changed the constitution to end the Communist party's monopoly in republic politics. The election postponement was reportedly the result of intense negotiations between Gumbaridze and opposition leaders.

A new law on elections was passed by the Supreme Soviet in August 1990, after months of drafting and protests that ultimately ensured that the document fairly reflected views of a draft prepared by the opposition. The elections were to be truly multiparty; half of the 250 seats would be allocated according to the percentage of the vote obtained by a party throughout the republic, and the other half would be elected from the more traditional majority voting system in 125 districts. An unusual feature of the law was that electoral commissions at each level were to be independent and essentially created "from below," by the competing parties themselves, as they were registered. The registration process itself was under the control of a Central Electoral Commission, whose decisions were subject to appeal through the court system.[32]

Eleven parties or blocs of parties qualified and participated in the campaign. An analysis of their programs shows virtual unanimity on the main issue of independence and relations with Moscow. All parties, including the Communist party, sought to embrace independence as the only acceptable status for Georgia in the future. There were only slight and vague differences over questions of timing and the methods to be used to attain this end. The program of Gamsakhurdia's Round Table called for "restoring" Georgian independence that had been lost in 1921, but only gradually, after what was assumed would be a lengthy "transition period."[33]

The election and post-election political setting were complicated by the decision of two well-known radical nationalist parties to boycott the proceedings. The National Democratic Party of Georgia, led by Gia Chanturia, and the Party for the National Independence of Georgia, headed by Irakli Tsereteli, opposed all "official" institutions, including the republic Supreme Soviet. In early 1990, they urged the selection of a completely new representative body, the National Congress, which they said would serve as the conscience of the Georgian people and would oppose institutions dominated by the official Communist party.

Elections for the National Congress were held on September 30, 1990, a month before elections for the Supreme Soviet. The six main groups participating in the Congress did not enjoy wide popularity, though they had significant pockets of support in Georgian cities—particularly among the intelligentsia. The lack of official cooperation meant that basic tasks such as compiling voter lists and even estimating the total number of voters created insurmountable difficulties. The organizers of the election imposed on themselves a mini-

[30] *Zarya Vostoka*, Mar. 17, 1990.
[31] Ibid., Mar. 21, 1990.
[32] The election law appeared in ibid., Aug. 22, 1990.
[33] The political and economic platform of the Round Table was published in ibid., Oct. 23, 1990.

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mum turnout of 50 percent of eligible voters. Ultimately, they claimed to have achieved the minimum required turnout with 50.88 percent, in part by twice extending the voting to allow more people to participate. Even so, the turnout figure appears to have been inflated.[34]

The open hostility between leading opposition groups and their armed formations reached new heights during the concurrent election campaigns. The offices of Tsereteli's party (located on Rustaveli Prospect, in what used to be the Institute of Marxism-Leninism) were firebombed in the early morning hours of September 19. Two of Gamsakhurdia's bodyguards were found shot to death at one of the Round Table offices at the beginning of October. Chanturia himself was wounded in an attack two days before the Supreme Soviet elections. The perpetrators of these acts were never identified, but the events heightened tensions and led to increasingly bitter exchanges between Gamsakhurdia and leaders of the Congress.[35]

On October 28, the first round of the elections to the Supreme Soviet was held. The only two parties to receive more than the 4 percent minimum required for party representation in the proportional representation balloting were the Round Table (54 percent) and the Communist party (30 percent). By the time the second round of individual races was completed, the Round Table had captured a clear majority of 155 seats in the 250-member parliament.[36] Additional seats were won in the second round by the Popular Front, with the cooperation of the Round Table, so that it ended up with 12 deputies. Gamsakhurdia was elected chairman of the Supreme Soviet, and he quickly formed a government that was primarily made up of members of the Round Table coalition of parties.

In a move that won widespread approval in Georgia, Gamsakhurdia appointed Tengiz Sigua, a leading figure in the Rustaveli Society and the respected deputy head of the Central Election Commission, as prime minister. In order to obtain additional legitimacy—a step later taken by Boris Yel'tsin in the Russian republic—Gamsakhurdia later introduced a direct election for the new post of president of the republic. The election was held in May 1991, making Georgia the first republic to hold a contested popular election for president. Gamsakhurdia won easily, with over 86 percent of the vote in a field that included five other candidates.[37]

The Communists won 64 seats in the parliament, but decided not to form their own platform or act as an opposition party.[38] They supported the Round Table on virtually every issue, with the result that almost all votes approached unanimity. Party leader Avtandil Margiani, in an interview, acknowledged the popularity of the Round Table, predicted that they would take control of most local government offices when local elections were held, and said that he thought this was a good thing for Georgia.[39] According to a statement issued by

Georgian leader Zviad Gamsakhurdia offers a candle at the Svetitckhoveli Cathedral in Tbilisi after casting his ballot in the Georgian presidential elections on May 26, 1991.

—AP/Wide World.

[34]Election result claims appeared in *Molodezh' Gruzii* of Oct. 26, 1990. In an interview in *Zarya Vostoka* of Sept. 29, 1990, the head of the Congress election commission indicated that there were approximately 4 million eligible voters, and that 3,000 precincts had been created. In contrast to this evident exaggeration, Gamsakhurdia grossly underestimated the turnout at only 2 percent. See ibid., Dec. 8, 1990.

[35]While the National Congress leadership was quick to blame Gamsakhurdia for attacks on them, he denied any involvement and accused the "economic mafia"—corrupt party officials and underground profiteers—and Moscow of plotting to create an atmosphere of crisis and to destabilize the Georgian political scene.

[36]A much more detailed examination of the Georgian elections—the author served as an official observer at the invitation of the Central Election Commission—as well as of republic-level elections in all other republics, will appear in Darrell Slider, Ed., *Elections and Political Change in the Soviet Republics*, forthcoming.

[37]The other candidates included leaders of the Georgian Popular Front (Nodar Natadze—who received 1.2 percent of the vote), the Communist party (Jemal Mikeladze—1.7 percent), the "Freedom" bloc (Irakli Shengelia—0.9 percent), the Union for National Accord and Rebirth (Valerian Advadze—8 percent), and the Georgian Union of Free Democrats (Tamaz Kvachantiradze—0.3 percent).

[38]On the decision not to create a platform, see the interview with G. Kashakashvili, *Zarya Vostoka*, Nov. 16, 1990.

[39]Ibid., Dec. 14, 1990. In a *Pravda* interview of Jan. 30, 1991, Margiani stated that "we have no fundamental differences" with the national independence movement.

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the new party Central Committee, the Communist party supported joint efforts "to build an independent, democratic, and Christian Georgia."[40] Despite Gamsakhurdia's vehement anticommunism, several prominent reformist members of the Communist party—in particular specialists in economic matters—received key positions in the new government.[41]

Despite this aura of cooperation, Communist organizations clung to power in areas of Abkhazia, Ajara, and the south of the republic. The continued role of these local leaders, often operating in conjunction with key figures in the underground economy, led Gamsakhurdia to adopt in February 1991 a prefect system in order to manage policy at the district level. Variations of this institution were later proposed in Moldova, Moscow, and the Russian republic, for similar reasons. The prefects were appointed directly by Gamsakhurdia and had wide-ranging powers over policy.[42] Local soviets were replaced by a new organ, the "*sakrebulo,*" or "assembly" in Georgian. Elections for the assemblies were held at the end of March 1991, but the appointment of the prefects diminished the role of these bodies.

Opposition to Gamsakhurdia

Gamsakhurdia's chief political opposition at first consisted of parties and groups not represented in parliament, either because they failed to get any of their candidates elected or because they chose not to participate in the elections. The only opposition to Gamsakhurdia within the parliament elected in 1990 was a group of 12 deputies from the Popular Front, headed by Nodar Natadze, and Democratic Georgia, another small party. The group, which called itself the "Democratic Center," was too small to have an appreciable impact.[43]

After the elections to the Supreme Soviet, the Round Table bloc almost immediately began negotiations with leaders of the National Congress to seek some sort of accommodation. A principal objective was to avoid violent incidents between forces supporting the two groups, which might serve as a pretext for intervention by Moscow in Georgian politics. These negotiations proved fruitless. Parties active in the National Congress refused to participate in the subsequent presidential election. (In addition, internal disputes broke out among leaders of the National Congress, particularly after KGB documents were published in the Georgian press implying that one of its leaders, Gia Chanturia, had cooperated with his captors while in prison.)[44]

A few political groups attempted to use existing institutions to challenge the dominant position of Gamsakhurdia. However, his overwhelming popularity and authority were impossible to overcome. The candidate who came in second to Gamsakhurdia in the race for president was Valerian Advadze, an economist who was director of the Gosplan economics institute in Tbilisi. Advadze, who received 8 percent of the vote, ran as leader of the Union of National Concord and Rebirth, a party whose top officials had been leading figures in research institutes and among the cultural intelligentsia.

The increasing frustration of the opposition and the rising political polarization within the Georgian intelligentsia led to charges that Gamsakhurdia was a "fascist" who suppressed and harassed the opposition, closed opposition newspapers, and subverted the electoral process. Advadze, for example, alleged that there had been massive vote fraud during the presidential election, and claimed he should have received about 40 percent of the vote.[45] Television, which was firmly under the control of the new government, gave Gamsakhurdia a distinct advantage. However, opposition newspapers continued to be published, although often with low circulations.

Complaints about Gamskhurdia's tactics stemmed in part from his efforts to rein in unofficial armed formations in Georgia.[46] Operating most openly were the

[40] *Zarya Vostoka,* Dec. 19, 1990.

[41] One of the most interesting cases was the appointment of Bakur Gulua, former first secretary in the city of Poti and initiator of an important experiment in local budget reform. After being elected to parliament in 1990 on the Communist party slate, Gulua was named to head the parliamentary committee on industry, construction, energy, and transportation. In August 1991, Gulua was appointed deputy chairman of the Georgian government—a post formerly called deputy prime minister. In that post he will clearly have an important role in the area of economic reform. On Gulua's early career, see Darrell Slider, "More Power to the Soviets?" *British Journal of Political Science* (Cambridge), October 1986, pp. 495–511.

[42] The law on the prefecture was published in *Svobodnaya Gruziya* (Tbilisi), Apr. 27, 1991.

[43] The group was organized on May 14, 1991. Ibid., May 17, 1991.

[44] The documents, which date back to 1985, appeared in *Vestnik Gruzii* (Tbilisi), Feb. 14, 1991. Chanturia claimed these were forgeries. In part, the disclosures were in response to repeated accusations by Chanturia that Gamsakhurdia had worked for the KGB in the past and was adopting policies that would serve Soviet interests.

[45] The author interviewed Advadze on June 28, 1991, in Moscow, where he continued to serve as deputy to the Supreme Soviet.

However, independent observers denied that there was any significant fraud. This point was made, for example, in an interview conducted by the author in Tbilisi in July with one of the leaders of the independent political party Democratic Choice in Georgia (DAS), Vakhtang Khmaladze. DAS supported another of Gamsakhurdia's opponents, and was the organization that played the major role in drafting republic election laws in 1990 and 1991. A group of international observers also reported that any violations they discovered were minor.

[46] The supporters of Gamsakhurdia also operated illegal formations, such as the White George Movement. These units were later dissolved into the national guard and came under the control of the government.

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"Mkhedrioni" (meaning "horsemen" in Georgian), said to number about 5,000. The pre-election, Communist-run Supreme Soviet, under pressure from informal groups, had guaranteed legal status to some such formations. The Mkhedrioni, led by Dzhaba Ioseliani and connected with Tsereteli's National Independence Party, played a role in exacerbating ethnic conflicts in Abkhazia in 1989 and later in South Ossetia. Immediately after the October 1990 elections, the Mkhedrioni conducted a number of attacks on local police stations for the purpose of obtaining weapons. There were also several attacks on Soviet military installations.[47]

Gamsakhurdia's argument that such attacks could serve as a pretext for an armed intervention by Moscow ultimately proved correct. After a Mkhedrioni attack on a Soviet installation in February 1991, the Soviet army moved against Mkhedrioni headquarters outside Tbilisi, apparently without consulting with the Georgian government. Shortly thereafter, Gamsakhurdia ordered a round-up of leaders of the organization, including Ioseliani. Opposition leaders subsequently sought to depict Ioseliani and his associates as political prisoners; however, it is hard to imagine any government that would permit an armed opposition to operate freely on its territory.

The Transition to Independence

During the election campaign, Gamsakhurdia and other Georgian political figures had frequently spoken of the need for a period of transition pending achievement of complete independence for the republic. Laws and policies adopted by the parliament shaped the transition. The Law on the Transition Period, adopted on November 14, 1990,[48] which made a number of changes in the Georgian constitution, was an attempt to set a middle course, allowing for some compromise with Moscow while pushing for a complete rebuilding of political and economic institutions. The law established the precedence on Georgian territory of Georgian laws over the laws and decisions of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Soviet president. Gamsakhurdia, however, refused to commit himself to a time frame for the transition to total independence, arguing that it did not depend on Georgia alone.[49]

Political issues. Almost immediately, the government changed the state symbols. The flag of Soviet Georgia outside of the government building was replaced with the flag from the 1918–21 independence period.[50] The name of the republic was changed from the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia to simply the Republic of Georgia, and the words "soviet" and "socialist" were removed from the constitution. The celebration of public holidays was shifted from marking socialist anniversaries (such as November 7 and May 1) to commemorating national or religious events.

Political ties with the Kremlin were strained at best. Sigua and the vice-chairman of the republic parliament, Akaki Asatiani, attended a few of the early meetings of Gorbachev's Council of the Federation, but Georgia's seat was often empty at these meetings.[51] The republic's leadership repeatedly stated that Georgia would refuse to sign a new Union treaty in any form, and that any such treaties were invalid unless the signatories possessed equal status under international law."[52] Yet, Gamsakhurdia repeatedly went out of his way to stress that the victory of the Round Table did not mean that Georgia would soon break with the Soviet Union. What it meant was that, in his words, Georgia "is no longer a colony, but it is not yet an independent country."[53] In particular, he saw economic ties with the Soviet Union as continuing for a long time.

Economic issues. As an economic entity, Georgia suffered from the same problems faced by the other republics after years of Soviet socialism and isolation from the world market: excessive money in circulation; inadequate incentives and excessive state control over the economy; low-quality goods and antiquated technology; production, transportation, and trade links that are highly integrated with other republics.

On the other hand, Georgia has a relatively advantageous geographical position, with an outlet to the Mediterranean through the Black Sea, as well as a wide variety of natural resources. It includes within its borders a range of climate zones that permits varied agricultural output, though some crops grown for the Soviet market, such as tea, do not meet the standards needed for export elsewhere. Georgia also has a potential for tourism that has hardly been tapped.

Georgia is, however, dependent on other republics

[47]The attacks occurred in eastern Georgia. See the report in *Trud* (Moscow), Nov. 16, 1990.

[48]*Zarya Vostoka*, Nov. 15, 1990.

[49]See Gamsakhurdia's first speech as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, November 15, 1990, in ibid., Nov. 16, 1990.

[50]The flag of independent Georgia was virtually unknown to most Georgians until 1989, when it was resurrected by opposition groups and became a popular symbol of Georgian aspirations.

[51]According to a February 1991 interview with Asatiani in Washington, the Georgians attended three sessions: those devoted to the Union treaty (to announce they would have no part of it), to events in the Baltic (to side with Lithuania and Latvia), and to economic questions.

[52]Gamsakhurdia's letter to Gorbachev outlining his views on the draft Union treaty appeared in *Zarya Vostoka*, Nov. 25, 1990.

[53]From Gamsakhurdia's November 15 speech to the Georgian Supreme Soviet, loc. cit.

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for a large portion of its food supplies and energy resources. Tengiz Sigua conceded in his first speech as prime minister that in 1991, Georgia would be willing to continue to operate within the Soviet planning system.[54] A boycott or a blockade by the rest of the Soviet market would be devastating in the short run. Georgian leaders argued that the government of former Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov had in fact imposed such a blockade on Georgia in the first half of 1991 as punishment for the republic's refusal to sign the new Union treaty. There were also claims that shipments intended for Georgia were being unloaded in adjoining provinces of the RSFSR and sold to the local population with the connivance of local Communist officials. Shortages of fuel and electricity forced Georgia to close down over 60 percent of the republic's industrial capacity in January and February 1991. Good bilateral relations with Azerbaijan—the new Azerbaijani prime minister had familial links to Georgia—and Turkey helped fill some of the requirements for fuel and electricity in winter 1990–91.

Military and security issues. The fact that Soviet military and internal-security forces had been employed against Georgian demonstrators in April 1989 made relations with Moscow over military, police, and security issues particularly sensitive. As in the Baltic, the military draft was one of the first bones of contention. Of all the Soviet republics, Georgia had the lowest rate of recruitment in the fall of 1990, approximately 10 percent of its quota.[55] One of the first acts passed by the new parliament was to end the Soviet military draft on Georgian territory. Instead, young Georgian males would be drafted into new "special divisions" for maintaining order within the republic under the control of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs.[56] On December 20, 1990, a law was passed creating this force and calling it the Georgian "national guard."[57] Thus, Georgia became one of the first republics to take concrete steps toward creating its own army.[58]

Just after the elections, the Georgian branch of DOSAAF, the Soviet organization charged with pre-military training of youth and with maintaining other links between the populace and the Soviet armed forces, was renamed the Georgian Society for Assisting the Army. According to its chairman, its new pupose was "preparing cadres for future national army formations."[59] In the aftermath of the August 1991 coup attempt, it was announced that Georgia would form its own ministry of defense, which ultimately would include, in addition to an army, a navy and an air force.

Georgia indicated that it would be willing to cooperate with other republics for their common defense, but on September 15, the parliament passed a law demanding the removal of all Soviet troops from the republic.[60] Until the August coup, relations between Gamsakhurdia and the commander of the Transcaucasus Military District had been surprisingly good, primarily because—unlike Soviet forces in the Baltic republics—the Soviet military kept a very low profile in Georgia. In October 1991, Gamsakhurdia stated that there were 210,000 Soviet troops stationed in Georgia.[61]

Pressure on the republic KGB was direct and overt. On September 16, 1990, after a massive campaign rally for the Round Table at the sports stadium, a large group, mostly from the St. Ilia the Righteous Society (one of the parties making up the electoral bloc) went to republic KGB headquarters and broke through the doors. About 200 people occupied the building for 24 hours before departing peacefully. They reportedly went through KGB files and removed some from the building. Several days later, an official announcement from the Georgian KGB stated: "We consider ourselves an integral part of the Georgian people and are prepared to serve faithfully . . . [and] submit to the will of those elected by the people [in the parliamentary election]."[62] At about the same time, a group of former and current KGB officials published a letter in the Georgian newspaper *Kommunisti* in which they criticized the republic KGB leadership for resisting reform and called for a thorough restructuring of the organization to make it "a genuine defender of the national interests and state sovereignty of Georgia."[63]

Moscow and the new Georgian government soon clashed over appointments to top security posts in the

[54]Speech reported in *Zarya Vostoka*, Nov. 16, 1990.

[55]*Komsomol'skaya Pravda*, Jan. 9, 1991. The next lowest rate was in Lithuania, at 12.5 percent. See also the interview with the chief of the Transcaucasus Military District in *Krasnaya Zvezda* (Moscow), Dec. 7, 1990.

[56]New laws on military service and law and order were published in *Zarya Vostoka*, Nov. 16, 1990.

[57]The law was published in ibid., Dec. 21, 1990. At the time of the August coup, the guard was subordinated directly to the interior ministry, and the ministry's own guard was dismissed. See *Svobodnaya Gruziya*, Aug. 24, 1991.

[58]A useful listing of military forces in the republics appears in *Komsomol'skaya Pravda*, Mar. 12, 1991.

[59]*Zarya Vostoka*, Nov. 8, 1990.

[60]Georgian willingness to participate in defensive arrangements was stated by Akaki Asatiani in his speech before the Congress of People's Deputies, September 3, 1991. Asatiani's speech appeared in *Svobodnaya Gruziya*, Sept. 4, 1991; laws passed at the September 15 session were published in ibid., Sept. 17, 1991.

[61]Interview in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (Moscow), Oct. 30, 1991.

[62]*Zarya Vostoka*, Sept. 22, 1990.

[63]The letter appeared Sept. 28, 1990, and was translated in *Vecherniy Tbilisi* (Tbilisi), Oct. 5, 1990.

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republic. The republic's parliamentary commission on security removed Tariel Lortkipanidze as KGB chief on November 27, 1990, and named its own candidate, Otar Khatiashvili—a man who had been dismissed from the republic KGB for protesting the April 1989 massacre—to replace him. Moscow attempted to retain its traditional prerogative of naming the republic secret police chief, but Tbilisi responded by leaving the chairman post vacant and naming Khatiashvili first deputy chairman, i.e., acting chairman. A gathering of officers of the Georgian KGB protested Gorbachev's "interference" and gave their full support to the Georgian parliament and the new republic KGB leadership.[64] (Moscow attempted, with somewhat more success, to retain control over KGB units in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, a situation that Gamsakhurdia vowed to change.)[65] In the days that followed the failed August coup, Gamsakhurdia sought to bring the KGB more directly under his personal control, replacing Khatiashvili with Tamaz Ninua.[66]

Ethnic Issues

Even as Georgia proceeded toward the goal of independence from Moscow, it was raising alarm among some of the republic's ethnic minorities. Although Moscow's complicity in rousing such concerns cannot be ruled out, these issues were not new to the multiethnic republic.

The three largest ethnic minorities in Georgia—the Armenians, Russians, and Azeris—have been relatively quiescent. This can be attributed to several factors. Armenians and Azeris play a prominent role in the Georgian economy, particularly in agriculture and trade. A large portion of these groups as well as Russians have lived in Georgia for generations and have assimilated well. All three groups are also relatively widely dispersed throughout the republic, though there are concentrated populations of Armenians and Azeris in the south. Perhaps most important, the lack of an explicit territorial jurisdiction corresponding to any of these three ethnic groups meant that there was no extensive structure of administrative sinecures and privileges to foster ethnic political activism.

The prospect of Georgian independence has, as a rule, not been viewed as a threat by these three minorities. Georgia, like the Baltic republics and Armenia, held its own referendum on independence on March 31, 1991, as a substitute for Gorbachev's March 17 national referendum on preserving a "renewed" Union. Independence was approved by more than 98 percent of those who voted in Georgia. Armenian and Azeri regions also overwhelmingly supported independence—perhaps influenced in part by Gamsakhurdia's implied threat that groups opposing Georgian interests would not obtain citizenship or be eligible for land ownership. In the election for president of the republic, Gamsakhurdia won a majority in districts that are predominantly Azeri or Armenian.[67] The only serious disputes that emerged in these areas were over Gamsakhurdia's subsequent appointment of Georgians as local prefects.

A source of considerable concern to Georgians has been the possible return of the thousands of Meskhetian Turks, an Islamic population native to southwest Georgia that was deported to Central Asia en masse by Stalin during World War II. In 1989, attacks on the Meskhetians in Uzbekistan and elsewhere led many of this ethnic group to attempt to return to reclaim their homeland in Georgia. Many Georgians feared that the Meskhetians had lost all past ties to Georgia, including their knowledge of Georgian, and would ultimately seek to separate their territory from Georgia, perhaps to become part of Turkey. To prevent their return from Central Asia at the time of the crisis, Georgian officials went to the extreme of faking a landslide on the Georgian Military Highway, the only entrance point to Georgia from the northeast.[68] In other parts of the republic, roadblocks were set up and manned at key points by Georgian "volunteers" to prevent the return of the Meskhetians. In late 1990, Meskhetian refugees massed on the border with Georgia near Sochi and threatened to force their way into Georgia, but eventually relented in hopes of obtaining a negotiated settlement of their claims. By autumn 1991, few Meskhetians had succeeded in returning to Georgia.

The most serious ethnic problems in the recent past

[64]Moscow's first reaction came in the form of an announcement from the KGB on a Soviet television news program. See Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-SOV*), Nov. 30, 1990, p. 97. The Georgian KGB's reaction was described in *Zarya Vostoka*, Dec. 1, 1990.

[65]Dec. 8, 1990, press conference published in ibid., Dec. 19, 1990.

[66]*Svobodnaya Gruziya*, Aug. 24, 1991.

[67]Gamsakhurdia got 86 percent in Marneuli, which is 80 percent Azeri, and 52 percent in Akhalkalaki, which is 91 percent Armenian.

In recent years, the Communist regime had attempted to use economic incentives to encourage the departure of Azeris, with payments reportedly of up to 5,000 rubles for Azeris who agreed to take up residence in Azerbaijan. Few accepted the offer.

[68]The author made a trip north on the highway in July 1989 and was turned back at the "landslide." A low-ranking official with the Ministry of the Interior reported a few days later that he had heard through official channels that the obstruction had been created to block the potential flow of refugees.

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Table 1: Ethnic Composition of Georgia, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia, 1979 and 1989

(in percent)

	1979	1989
	GEORGIA	
Georgians	68.8	70.1
Armenians	9.0	8.l
Russians	7.4	6.3
Azeri	5.1	5.7
Ossetians	3.2	3.0
Greeks	1.9	1.8
Abkhaz	1.7	1.8
Ukrainians	0.9	1.0
	ABKHAZ ASSR	
Georgians	43.9	45.7
Abkhaz	17.1	17.8
Armenians	15.1	14.6
Russians	16.4	14.2
	SOUTH OSSETIAN AUTON. OBLAST	
Ossetians	66.4	66.2
Georgians	28.8	29.0
Russians	2.1	2.1
Armenians	1.0	1.0

SOURCE: 1989 census, published in *Zarya Vostoka* (Tbilisi), Mar. 23, 1990.

Table 2: Representation of Georgians and Titular Nationalities in Political Administrative Structures of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, 1990

(in percent)

	ABKHAZ ASSR	
	Abkhaz	Georgians
Govt. ministers	66.7	25.0
Party obkom memb.	43.7	41.2
Obkom dept. heads	71.4	28.6
Chair, state commit.	62.5	37.5
Prosecutors	62.5	na
	SOUTH OSSETIAN AUTON. OBLAST	
	Ossetians	Georgians
Party apparatus	60.7	24.3
State apparatus	77.5	21.6
Service sector	62.3	26.2
Trade sector	77.0	14.2
Cult. *nomenklatura*	77.5	na

SOURCE: R. Miminoshvili and G. Pandzhikidze, *Pravda ob Abkhazii* (The Truth About Abkhazia), Tbilisi, Merani, 1990, p. 6; and statistics on Ossetia compiled by a Georgian commission created by the republic Supreme Soviet before the elections and reported by Gamsakhurdia in a speech to that body, *Zarya Vostoka*, Dec. 14, 1990.

The premises of the Georgian sector of the Abkhaz State University in Sukhumi after local forces sacked it in July 1989 to protest a move to convert it into an affiliate of Tbilisi University.

—G. Tsagareli/Novosti from Sovfoto.

have come from two small ethnic groups, the Abkhaz (1.8 percent of the republic's population in 1989) and the Ossetians (3 percent, many of whom live outside of South Ossetia). Both groups have a long list of perceived historical grievances against Georgia and Georgians; they claim that Tbilisi has discriminated against them economically and culturally.

There is in the most recent period little apparent evidence supporting these charges, although Georgian scholars and political figures have sometimes antagonized both groups with insensitive and biased accounts of their history. Both Abkhaz and Ossetians have had extensive opportunities for education in their native languages as well as effective control over several institutions of higher education and research. In fact, these institutes served as an intellectual base for nationalist movements in both regions. In recent years, as a result of past "affirmative action" programs adopted under pressure from Moscow, the Abkhaz and Ossetians actually held a disproportionate share of political and economic power within their regions (see Tables 1 and 2). The advent of democratic elections threatened this privileged position, which the minorities and local Communist party organs wanted to perpetuate. The groups with the most legitimate grievances of underrepresentation were the Armenian and Russian minorities in Abkhazia, who were hardly represented in

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the region's political administrative structure.[69]

The course of Georgian politics prior to the parliamentary elections made it apparent to leaders in Abkhazia and South Ossetia that Georgian nationalists planning to take Georgia out of the USSR were likely to win the republic elections. The minority popular fronts, *Aidgylara* in Abkhazia and *Adamon Nykhas* in South Ossetia, feared that an independent Georgia would be even less likely to respect their rights than the Communist regime had been, and that there would no longer be the option of turning to Moscow for assistance. Thus, both groups pushed for secession from Georgia and declared their fealty to Moscow. Nationalists in both regions boycotted the October 1990 republic elections and participated in Gorbachev's March 1991 referendum instead of Georgia's independence vote. In part, the drive for sovereignty prior to local elections in Georgia reflects the power of newly created informal groups to control the political agenda in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, a phenomenon that parallels the role of Georgian nationalists in Tbilisi in 1989 and 1990.

In both Abkhazia and South Ossetia, local Communist party and government officials from the titular minority nationalities sometimes cooperated with the informal groups in an attempt to maintain themselves in power. One strategy pursued by local officials was to preserve institutional ties with Moscow despite Georgian efforts to sever them. For example, the Komsomol continued to function in both Abkhazia and Ossetia long after the organization had dissolved in Georgia as a whole.[70] When the Communist Party of Georgia decided to break with Moscow in December 1990, Abkhaz and South Ossetian party leaders refused to participate in the voting on these issues, and apparently maintained ties with the CPSU.

Nationalist movements in Abkhazia and South Ossetia sought to maintain ties with the center in numerous other ways. The most explicit was the December 11, 1990, vote by the "Supreme Soviet of the South Ossetian Soviet Republic" (chosen in local elections condemned by Tbilisi) to subordinate the republic directly to the USSR, a move that Moscow as well as Georgia refused to accept.[71] The Georgian parliament then escalated the conflict by voting unanimously to abolish South Ossetia as an autonomous entity within Georgia.[72] Open warfare between Georgian and Ossetian armed groups soon broke out, despite the presence of Soviet military forces in the region.

The local movements expressed strong support for Leninism and *perestroyka.* In its program, *Aidgylara* listed as one of its primary goals "assisting the policy of the CPSU aimed at . . . the formation of ethnic relations on the basis of Leninist principles of equality of nations." It declared its opposition to attempts to "undermine the socialist foundations of society."[73] When Moscow hard-liners staged their coup in August 1991, the Abkhaz Communist party immediately supported their actions; for this, it was subsequently shut down by Georgian officials.[74] *Adamon Nykhas,* the Ossetian nationalist group, also expressed fealty to the CPSU in its early programmatic documents and vowed to act in accordance with the constitution and laws of the USSR.[75]

Symbolic links to Moscow were also preserved in both regions. The only major monuments to Lenin still standing in Georgia by the time of the October 1990 elections were in the Abkhaz capital of Sukhumi and in the town of Gudauta. On November 7, 1990, the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution was celebrated only in Tskhinvali, Sukhumi, and Gudauta, and Gudauta was the only city in Georgia to stage a military parade to mark the occasion.[76]

Negotiations between Georgian officials and the Abkhaz leadership resulted in a compromise on elections to the Abkhaz parliament. In the rules that were applied to the September 22, 1991, elections, the ethnic mix of the parliament was predetermined: of 65 seats, 28 were reserved for the Abkhaz, 26 for Georgians, and 11 for other nationalities.[77] In South Ossetia, the armed confrontation continued. A joint Soviet, Russian, and Georgian parliamentary fact-finding mission determined that the conflict was essentially a power grab by local elites rather than a genuine ethnic crisis.[78] Reduction of the number of Georgian troops occupying the region in favor of all-Union forces[79] did

[69]Abkhaz nationalists have sought to capitalize on this fact to win support for their cause among other non-Georgians in Abkhazia.

[70]*Sovetskaya Osetiya* (Tsinkhvali), Sept. 15, 1990. In Abkhazia, the Komsomol was directly subordinate to the all-Union parent organization. *Sovetskaya Abkhaziya* (Sukhumi), Sept. 20, 1990.

[71]The actions of the South Ossetian Supreme Soviet are summarized in the USSR Supreme Soviet's appeal to both parties in the dispute. See *Izvestiya,* Dec. 15, 1990.

[72]Georgia's reasons for abolishing the autonomous republic were presented in *Zarya Vostoka,* Dec. 14, 1990.

[73]The program/rules of the Abkhaz popular front were published in *Sovetskaya Abkhaziya,* June 22, 1989. (The author is indebted to Elizabeth Fuller for this source.) One of the clearest expressions of loyalty to the Communist party and Soviet rule was an open letter from the Gudauta branch of *Aidgylara* in the Gudauta newspaper, *Bzyb',* Mar. 3, 1990.

[74]*Svobodnaya Gruziya,* Aug. 21, 1991.

[75]The charter of *Adamon Nykhas* was published in *Sovetskaya Osetiya,* Aug. 23, 1990.

[76]*Zarya Vostoka,* Nov. 8, 1990. In other Georgian cities, November 7 was a normal workday.

[77]*Svobodnaya Gruziya,* Sept. 12, 1991.

[78]On the creation of the commission, see Moscow Radio, Apr. 24, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV,* Apr. 25, 1991, p. 20.

[79]This decision had nothing to do with Gorbachev's order providing for joint patrols by local police and the Soviet army. The Georgian parliament rejected the application of this measure on Georgian territory. See *FBIS-SOV,* Jan. 31, 1991, p. 60.

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little to lower the temperature of the conflict. In November 1991, the Russian parliament returned to the issue of South Ossetia and threatened economic sanctions against Georgia if it did not take steps to end the conflict and restore South Ossetia's autonomy.[80]

Prospects for Georgia

Ultimately, Georgia's success in achieving and sustaining independence will depend on how the outside world views the republic's handling of the rights of minorities, its success in pursuing economic reform, and its commitment to democracy and political pluralism. On each count, the current leadership faces enormous challenges in the coming years.

As suggested above, the problem of ethnic minorities is potentially the most explosive. However, the collapse of the Soviet center in the wake of the August coup should help push the Georgians, the Abkhaz, and the Ossetians toward compromise. For Georgians, the threat that their republic might be dismembered is less real in the absence of a strong central authority that might fish in troubled ethnic waters. For the Abkhaz and Ossetians, the likelihood of Georgia achieving independence in its current configuration has increased significantly, leaving them little choice but to negotiate seriously. Their strength lies in the importance the outside world attaches to their treatment in the new Georgia.

The Georgian leadership had been cautious in embarking on economic reform, but it began to move more decisively by the late summer of 1991. In August, the republic legislature created a national bank and committed Georgia to issuing its own currency at some future date.[81] A law on privatization was finally passed in September 1991, after much debate over ways to prevent the "economic mafia" from becoming the primary beneficiary. Despite the collapse of the center in the aftermath of the August 1991 coup, Georgia refused to sign the new economic agreement between the republics. The Georgian leadership indicated that it would be willing to sign an economic agreement only if other republics explicitly recognized Georgia's political independence.[82]

The political prospects within Georgia remain extremely uncertain, in part because Gamsakhurdia himself is a complex and unpredictable figure, and in part because most opposition groups have chosen to put themselves outside the legal political process. Urbane, well-educated, and Western-oriented, Gamsakhurdia has shown an ability to compromise, at times demonstrating great political skill. At the same time, he has used his enormous electoral triumphs as a pretext for pushing through policies without broad public discussion and with little input from opposition groups. He also has used the threat of efforts by Moscow to retain Georgia as a colony to justify various authoritarian measures such as the institution of local prefects (all of whom were chosen by Gamsakhurdia, thereby overshadowing the election of local soviets or assemblies) or the September 1991 law specifying a new mayor of Tbilisi—to be appointed by Gamsakhurdia, rather than elected.[83]

Gamsakhurdia is impatient with critics and has had long-standing feuds with many opposition leaders. He trusts few people and is quick to fault the motives of opposition groups. The number of appointees needed to staff the new government and other posts quickly exhausted his limited circle of trusted associates. Gamsakhurdia's background led him to distrust Communist officials and academics who had advanced through the ranks of the "party intelligentsia." As a consequence, he often appointed people who had no administrative experience and little knowledge of their new area of responsibility.[84] He has also been embarrassed by a number of cases of corruption among his early appointees. The new minister of trade disappeared for a time in Western Europe, spent large amounts of hard currency, and was arrested upon his return.[85] Several members of the presidential guard were also arrested on extortion charges.

A number of unpopular appointments made by Gamsakhurdia to the post of prefect necessitated their subsequent removal, and so there was a fairly high turnover rate for these officials. In August 1991, in a move designed to prevent them from engaging in potentially illicit business arrangements, Gamsakhurdia issued an order removing the prefects from the process of granting permission for exports.[86]

It must also be said that the opposition to Gamsakhurdia did little to create a political climate that would be conducive to democratic politics. By not participating in elections for the parliament, even after it became

[80] *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* (Moscow), Nov. 7, 1991.

[81] According to US Congressman from Florida Sam Gibbons, who headed a delegation to Tbilisi in early September, Gamsakhurdia revealed that a British concern had already entered into a contract to print the currency.

[82] *Svobodnaya Gruziya*, Oct. 19, 1991.

[83] Ibid., Sept. 5, 1991.

[84] Sigua (after having resigned) pointed to this as one of Gamsakhurdia's major failings.

[85] Although this incident was common knowledge in Tbilisi, the official's arrest was not reported in the Georgian media.

[86] *Svobodnaya Gruziya*, Aug. 21, 1991.

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clear that Communist authorities would be forced to permit free elections, several key opposition groups put themselves outside the political process. Instead, they have resorted to extra-parliamentary tactics ranging from mass rallies to supporting illegal armed formations. They also have allowed frustration with their political impotence in face of Gamskhurdia's popularity to fuel what are sometimes outrageous and unfounded attacks on the leadership of the republic. For example, opposition leaders such as Chanturia and Tsereteli have asserted that Gamsakhurdia is secretly an agent of Moscow, and that he has adopted policies designed to maintain the colonial status of Georgia. Similarly, opposition leaders have attempted to portray Gamsakhurdia as a supporter of the failed August coup because he reacted cautiously to the event. Talk of news censorship is exaggerated. Several newspapers under parliament's control have been merged into a single Georgian-language newspaper *Sakartvelos Respublika* alongside the Russian-language *Svobodnaya Gruziya*,[87] but opposition newspapers also exist, including the respected new entry *Droni*.

The recent sequence of events that began at about the time of the August 1991 coup does not augur well for the future of Georgian democracy. Gamsakhurdia's opponents quickly seized upon his actions toward the national guard as evidence of complicity with the plotters. During the coup, after a meeting with Soviet military officials, Gamsakhurdia ordered the national guard to disband, intending to reconstitute it as a special detachment within the Ministry of the Interior.

Gamsakhurdia's oft-stated belief that Soviet hardliners remained strong predisposed him to expect that the plotters would succeed. In part, his actions can be seen as an attempt to salvage as much of Georgia's newly won independence as possible without giving the center a pretext for Soviet military intervention. However, a large segment of the national guard viewed Gamsakhurdia's action as capitulation, and they fled with their weapons to a safe haven under their leader, Tengiz Kitovani. Gamsakhurdia dismissed Kitovani, a former actor and friend of his, on August 23.[88]

On September 2, a demonstration organized by Chanturia's party demanded that Gamsakhurdia resign for alleged complicity with the August coup-plotters. A clash between police and demonstrators occurred, and several people were wounded when police opened fire. This, in turn, temporarily united the opposition, including breakaway elements of the national guard under the leadership of Kitovani, and produced a new wave of protests against Gamsakhurdia. These protests then provoked further countermeasures.[89]

An opposition rally outside the Georgian radio and television building on September 26, 1991.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

Increasing conflicts between Gamsakhurdia and Prime Minister Sigua, one of the most highly respected members of the government, led to the latter's resignation in August 1991, just before the coup. Gamsakhurdia later accused Sigua of personally betraying him and of participating in a fantastic conspiracy with Shevardnadze to seek Gamsakhurdia's removal from the presidency. In another governmental shakeup, Georgi Khoshtaria, the foreign minister and a long-time associate of Gamsakhurdia's, was replaced in August and also accused of conspiring with Shevardnadze.[90] Both Sigua and Khoshtaria joined ranks with the growing opposition to Gamsakhurdia, and Sigua quickly became its leading spokesman.

Demonstrations grew in size and intensity in September, and for a period, Sigua and the opposition, aided by Kitovani's national guard, occupied the republic television building. Gamsakhurdia and his followers mounted counterdemonstrations, and clashes between the opposing groups left several people dead.

[87]See ibid., Sept. 4, 1991.

[88]Gamsakhurdia's order was published in ibid., Aug. 24, 1991. An interview with Kitovani appeared in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, Sept. 24, 1991.

[89]Based on Soviet television reports summarized by Celestine Bohlen in *The New York Times*, Sept. 4, 1991.

[90]See the attack on Sigua and Khoshtaria issued by the presidential press service in *Svobodnaya Gruziya*, Sept. 3, 1991. Sigua was replaced with a little-known social scientist, Vissarion Gugushvili.

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An uneasy standoff resulted from these confrontations, with Gamsakhurdia unwilling to make major concessions, and with the opposition refusing to give up its struggle. Gamsakhurdia's monopoly over the air waves was broken in late October 1991, when Sigua and his group were able to organize their own television broadcasts from a base just outside Tbilisi held by the breakaway faction of the national guard led by Kitovani.[91]

The opposition to Gamsakhurdia grew to include many of his former supporters in the Round Table. At a session of parliament held on September 15, a large group of deputies, alarmed by the growing unrest and Gamsakhurdia's rapid slide into authoritarianism, joined the opposition. The leading member of this group was Tedo Paatashvili, a Round Table strategist and chairman of the commission on foreign relations. As a result of these defections, the parliamentary opposition grew to about 40 deputies.[92] At the same session, deputies voted to set up a commission to investigate the September 2 incident.[93]

Gamsakhurdia's response to these events was troubling, showing a complete lack of tolerance for opposition voices. The failure of the August coup, which brought about the dissolution of the Soviet Communist party and began the transformation of the KGB and Soviet military, removed his chief justification for authoritarian measures. Yet, when he addressed mass rallies of supporters, often brought to Tbilisi from rural areas, Gamsakhurdia used highly inflammatory rhetoric, calling his opponents "traitors" and "agents of the Kremlin." On September 17, 1991, Gamsakhurdia's most vocal opponent Gia Chanturia, was taken from a plane bound for Moscow and imprisoned along with several other members of his party. A resolution adopted in the parliament at Gamsakhurdia's insistence depicted the opposition's actions of September and October as an attempted military coup against the legitimate, elected government (although it urged that no one be punished who ceased violating the law).[94]

In October, a number of leading moderate parties, including the Popular Front, the Democratic Choice for Georgia (DAS), the Green Party, the Republican Party, and the Union of Free Democrats, united to form the group "Democratic Movement of Georgia." Among its goals was a return to a "parliamentary" as opposed to "presidential" form of government.[95] Gamsakhurdia's response was to accuse the movement of attempting to "divide the nation, and to foist on it well-veiled ideas of communism."[96]

If Georgia is to attain the status of full independence with good relations with the outside world—the goal advocated by virtually all forces in Georgian political life—then both Gamsakhurdia and his opposition will have to change fundamentally the ways in which they interact. One solution sought by the opposition would be to call new parliamentary elections with the participation of all political groups along with guaranteed access to the media. But given the low level of development of political parties, it is conceivable that the result would be another deadlock, with no party or group of parties able to overcome Gamsakhurdia's advantage in popularity. Much will depend on Gamsakhurdia's willingness to begin a dialogue with the growing opposition and consolidate the political forces who all share the goal of obtaining recognition of Georgian independence.

[91] *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, Oct. 24, 1991.
[92] In October, Communist deputies were deprived of their seats when the party was banned, so that the total number of deputies stood at around 182.
[93] *Svobodnaya Gruziya*, Sept. 17, 1991.
[94] Ibid., Oct. 10, 1991.
[95] Ibid., Oct. 18, 1991.
[96] Ibid., Oct. 22, 1991.

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China and the Gulf Crisis: Escape from Predicaments

Yitzhak Shichor

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, has exposed a number of predicaments in China's foreign policy in general, and its Middle Eastern policy in particular. These predicaments stem from China's complex identity; it is simultaneously one of the great powers, a Third World nation, and a socialist developing country. Although these different identities can coexist in peacetime, they conflict in times of crisis, when Beijing takes sides, initiates its own policy, or follows that of others. However, these multiple identities also provide China with an opportunity to exploit international instability in order to promote its diverse interests, including those not directly related to the crisis.

China's behavior in the Gulf crisis is already well documented. This article proposes to place this behavior within a historical context, underscoring the lingering influence of Maoism on China's response to international affairs. It is my view that while adhering to a cautious, almost traditional policy toward the crisis, the old-guard leadership that reasserted its authority in the post-1989 period indeed managed to escape from the predicaments imposed after the Tiananmen massacre, and exposed by the Gulf war, to improve China's international position, and to modify related domestic policies—but not in a fundamental sense.

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Following a brief historical introduction, a number of examples illustrating China's manipulation of the Gulf crisis will be discussed: its relations with the United States, its performance in the United Nations Security Council, changes in defense modernization policy, and the implications for the mainland's relations with Taiwan and Israel. These different problems provide an occasion to analyze China's predicaments and Beijing's efforts to resolve them.

Background

Thirty years ago, on June 19, 1961, Kuwait was granted independence by the British. In line with his earlier statements, Iraq's leader 'Abd al-Karim Qasim responded by declaring Kuwait an integral part of Iraq. Although most of the Arab countries expressed firm opposition to Qasim's declaration, Kuwait, feeling exposed to Iraqi aggression and unable to defend itself, invited British troops onto Kuwaiti soil on June 30; they landed the next day. Proposals urging the UN Security Council to respect, endorse, and defend Kuwait's independence were vetoed by the Soviet Union. The inability of the UN to cope with these developments forced the Arab governments to deal with this problematic situation, wherein a newly liberated Arab country was being defended by a former "colonialist oppressor" against another "revolutionary" and "progressive" Arab country. In late July, over Iraq's protests, Kuwait was admitted to the Arab League and was recognized as an independent state by all the Arab countries. An "All-Arab" army was created and, following its deployment in Kuwait in September, the British troops finally withdrew.[1]

The conflict was settled, but not for China. From the very beginning the Chinese were caught in a difficult di-

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lemma. On the one hand, they wanted to recognize the independence of Kuwait. Yet, on the other hand, they realized that recognition of Kuwait's independence would upset China's already delicate relations with Iraq which, three years earlier, had become the fourth Middle Eastern government to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Iraqi ambassador to Beijing left no room for doubt on this score. In unequivocal terms, he warned the PRC that "Kuwait is a part of the Republic of Iraq just as Taiwan is a part of China and Goa is a part of India, and no conclusion of private pacts, formation of artificial governments, or process of time can change this fact."[2] Clearly, Beijing's recognition of Kuwait could have seriously disrupted PRC interests in the Middle East. China felt it could not afford to allow its relations with Iraq, which were already strained by the Iraqi persecution of local communists, to deteriorate further.

To escape from this predicament, the Chinese steered clear of an official recognition of Kuwait—but also of a total endorsement of Iraq's claims. They approved of the Kuwaiti "people's" demands for *independence, freedom,* and *liberation* from colonial rule as fully justified and acceptable to the Arab governments. Premier Zhou Enlai even sent Sheikh Abdullah as-Salim as-Sabah a message of congratulations on the proclamation of the independence of Kuwait.[3] As for Kuwait's *sovereignty,* this was considered by the Chinese an internal Arab affair, to be peacefully settled by the Arabs themselves without external interference. Accordingly, British "armed intervention," rather than Iraq's claim to Kuwait, became the PRC's main concern in the 1961 Gulf crisis.

It took nearly a decade of bargaining for the PRC and Kuwait to establish diplomatic relations. By the end of 1963, following the overthrow of Qasim (in early February), Kuwait had been recognized by more than 70 governments, including Iraq itself—as well as the Republic of China (ROC), which succeeded in establishing diplomatic relations with Kuwait on November 22, 1963, at the expense of the PRC. Despite this diplomatic standstill, which was probably a result of China's ambivalent attitude toward Kuwait's independence in 1961, economic relations between the two countries improved considerably in the 1960's, and in 1966, the PRC opened a Xinhua office in Kuwait. Chinese efforts to win Kuwaiti recognition during the late 1960's assumed even greater urgency for Beijing with the perceived emergence of the Soviet "threat." This, together with the end of the most violent phase of the Cultural Revolution, paved the way for China's return to the international community in general, and for rapprochement with the United States in particular.

It is against this background that the establishment of official diplomatic relations between Kuwait and the PRC, on March 22, 1971, should be interpreted.[4] These relations provided China with some tangible political and strategic advantages, including a foothold in the oil-rich Arabian Peninsula countries, and a channel of communication with them (primarily with Saudi Arabia). It also struck a blow to the ROC (whose diplomatic relations with Kuwait had been cut off). But the PRC's main benefits have been economic. Since 1971, Kuwait has become an important market for Chinese civilian goods as well as a channel for re-exports to other parts of the Arabian Peninsula. It has also become China's second most important market—after Iraq—for construction projects and labor services.

Also, in the 1982–89 period, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) provided the PRC with US$310 million in soft loans for the construction of 13 projects, in addition to the several joint ventures that had already been set up. Although the value of these transactions is much smaller than similar transactions with other countries, it is significant inasmuch as Kuwait is the only Third World country to provide China with loans. Its readiness to form economic relations with the Chinese has not been subject to political conditions, and has not been affected by China's domestic affairs, including the Tiananmen massacre.[5]

Iraq has been at least as important to the PRC as Kuwait, probably much more. Established in 1958, Sino-Iraqi relations became closer in the late 1970's, reflecting China's willingness to engage in more diversified international economic activity and arms sales, which coincided with Iraq's growing economic and military needs. By the summer of 1990, Iraq had become China's most important market for labor services and contracted projects. From 1976 to 1987, Iraq's share of the value of China's labor exports exceeded 50 percent (with nearly 70 percent of its total turnover), reaching $678 million. In those years, China also provided Iraq

[1]This section is based on Yitzhak Shichor, *The Middle East in China's Foreign Policy 1949–1977,* London, Cambridge University Press, 1979, pp. 102–03; and Hashim S. H. Behbehani, *China's Foreign Policy in the Arab World 1955–1975,* London, Kegan Paul International, 1981, pp. 192–98.

[2]Xinhua, July 14, 1961, quoted in Shichor, op. cit., p. 103.

[3]*Peking Review,* July 7, 1961, p. 29.

[4]For detailed coverage of Sino-Kuwaiti relations in the 1960's and early 1970's, see Behbehani, op. cit., pp. 198–216.

[5]Yitzhak Shichor, "China and the Middle East Since Tiananmen," in Allen S. Whiting, Ed., *Chinese Foreign Policy After Tiananmen,* special issue, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (Philadelphia), forthcoming in January 1992.

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with construction services valued at more than $1 billion.[6] While Sino-Iraqi trade has not been particularly impressive, Chinese exports to Iraq have by far exceeded imports, and thus provided the Chinese with urgently needed hard currency.

An even more important source of revenue has been arms sales. Following the eruption of the Iran-Iraq war in September 1980, Baghdad became China's leading arms customer. From 1982 to 1989, the estimated value of Chinese arms delivered to Iraq was $4.16 billion, nearly 32 percent of the value of all PRC arms deliveries in that period. According to unconfirmed reports, these included 250 Type–59 main battle tanks, 50 Type–69 main battle tanks, 70 Type–531 armored personnel carriers, and 20 F–7 fighters as well as spare parts and ammunition.[7]

In sum, on the eve of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the Chinese had developed a variety of political, military, and, most important, economic relations and interests with both countries. An editorial in *Guoji Shangbao* underscored these interests:

The Gulf region has always been China's important market. Before the eruption of the war, the volume of trade between China and the Gulf region reached over $2 billion. Nearly 1,000 labor contracts were signed with the region, and the contracted value was $2.7 billion. Of these, the amount of labor service contracts with Kuwait and Iraq reached $2.4 billion—$1.9 billion with Iraq and $500 million with Kuwait. For many years, about 10,000 laborers assiduously worked in the region, establishing a relatively high reputation for China.[8]

China and the Gulf War

These interests account, at least in part, for Beijing's hesitant response following Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. Caught by surprise, the Chinese expressed "grave concern about the sad incident of Iraqi troops' invading Kuwait" and maintained, in terms similar to those used in the 1961 Kuwait crisis, that "this issue should be solved within the scope of the Arab countries."[9]

It did not, however, take the Chinese long to realize the wider implications of the Gulf crisis, not only for the international community but also for China. Ostracized by most of the Western countries and Japan because of its brutal suppression of the Tiananmen Square demonstrations, China's leadership saw the Iraqi invasion as a springboard to start rehabilitating its crumbling political and economic relations with Japan, the European Community, and, most important, with the United States, which was playing the main role in the Gulf crisis. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the PRC also had the opportunity to demonstrate its indispensable position as one of the major powers by helping settle the Gulf crisis. For China, Iraq's aggression could thus be a blessing in disguise.

To succeed, the Chinese had to make the right policy choice between two principal options with regard to the Gulf crisis. One, a relic of the past, was to refuse either to interfere in conflicts between Third World countries or to identify and collaborate with the superpowers in settling such conflicts—in line with traditional and time-honored Maoist revolutionary policies. The other, a herald of the future, called for a new and bold policy of increased Chinese involvement in world affairs—in line with Beijing's readiness to shoulder its due burden in guarding international peace, both as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and, also, as a great power in its own right.

As it turned out, the Chinese chose neither option, or to be more precise, both. In a typically Confucian way they opted for the middle of the road: the PRC is a great power, but also a part (or even a self-proclaimed representative) of the Third World. And the PRC did intervene in the Gulf conflict, but only in a limited sense—having done, in fact, the minimum required to regain some of the assets it lost since Tiananmen. By adopting this policy, the Chinese have foregone an exceptional opportunity to break with the past and to clearly identify themselves as an upcoming great power.

China's ambivalence was reflected in its behavior throughout the crisis, and it affected its global, regional, and domestic situation. To begin with, China interpreted the origins of the Gulf conflict not so much in terms of the particular Iraqi-Kuwaiti context as in terms of the universal trends in international relations. Accordingly,

[6]The Editorial Board, *Almanac of China's Foreign Economic Relations and Trade 1988*, Beijing, n.d., pp. 744–52.

[7]Richard F. Grimmett, "Trends in Conventional Arms Transfers to the Third World by Major Supplier, 1982–1989," *CRS Report for Congress*, Washington, DC, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, June 19, 1990; Yitzhak Shichor, "Unfolded Arms: Beijing's Recent Military Sales Offensive," *The Pacific Review* (Oxford), No. 3, 1988, pp. 320–30; Li Ming-chiang, "One-Fourth of Iraq's Arms Are Supplied by China," *Tangtai* (Hong Kong), Aug. 28, 1990, pp. 13–14, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: China* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-CHI*), Aug. 23, 1990, pp. 10–12.

[8]Editorial, "Quickly Return to the Gulf Market," *Guoji shangbao* (Beijing), Mar. 21, 1991, p. 1, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Apr. 24, 1991, p. 1.

[9]Gu Yuqing, "Qian Qichen Says That China Is Gravely Concerned Over Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait," *Renmin ribao* (Beijing—hereafter, *RMRB*), Aug. 5, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Aug. 6, 1990, pp. 14–15.

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Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen registers China's abstention on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 678 authorizing military action to liberate Kuwait if Iraq did not withdraw its troops and release all its hostages by January 15, 1991.

—AP/Wide World.

Iraq, designated by the PRC as the "little hegemonist," took advantage of the gradual disintegration of the bipolar system, and mainly the weakness of the Soviet Union and its preoccupation with domestic problems, to launch its offensive against Kuwait. This offensive provided the United States, designated by the PRC as the "big hegemonist," with an opportunity to reassert itself as the predominant superpower.[10]

As in the earlier Iraq-Kuwait conflict, although the Chinese "understood" that the Arabian Peninsula governments' invitation of Western troops had been motivated by genuine security considerations, they still strongly criticized the foreign military presence as equally harmful to the peaceful settlement of the conflict as the Iraqi invasion itself.[11] As the main military force on the peninsula, the United States was singled out by the Chinese media and extensively attacked. These attacks, as well as the suppression of news reports of US military achievements, reflected China's concern about the United States' growing popularity among the Chinese public and, even more important, about its growing role in international affairs.[12] Nevertheless, the Chinese regarded the Gulf crisis as an opportunity to improve their relations with Washington.

Sino-US relations. On the eve of the Gulf crisis, China's relations with the United States were at a virtual standstill because of disagreements and frictions over the issues of human rights, the sale of missiles, and, last but not least, the Tiananmen massacre. It is unclear to what extent the wish to improve relations with Washing-

[10]Used in classified speeches and documents, the terms "little hegemonist" and "big hegemonist" were cited by the Hong Kong press. See, for example, *Kuang Chiao Ching*, Feb. 16, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 15, 1991, p. 22. See also "Anti-US Undercurrent in the Chinese Communist Military," *Kai Fang* (Hong Kong), Feb. 15, 1991, pp. 6–7, trans. in Joint Publications Research Service, *China Report* (Washington, DC), Mar. 6, 1991, pp. 84–86. Other terms used were "global hegemonism" and "regional hegemonism." See *Ching Pao* (Hong Kong), Mar. 10, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 11, 1991, p. 26.

[11]This stand has been reiterated many times. Qian Qichen, for example, stressed that China in principle is not in favor of military involvement in the Gulf by the big powers, because such involvement will only complicate the situation. Xinhua, Sept. 20, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Sept. 27, 1990, p. 1.

[12]For example, Rui Yingjie, "US Intentions in Dispatching Troops to the Gulf," *Ban Yue Tan* (Beijing), Sept. 25, 1990, pp. 56–57, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Nov. 1, 1990; Wu Zhi, "US Gains in the Gulf War," *Ta Kung Pao* (Hong Kong), Mar. 1, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 1, 1991, pp. 11–12; Cang Lide, "The United States Will Expedite Arms Exports to the Middle East," *RMRB* (Overseas Edition), Mar. 14, 1991, p. 6, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 15, 1991, p. 8. On US popularity in China, see "Chinese Greet Gulf War With Pro-US Fervor," *International Herald Tribune* (Paris), Feb. 20, 1991, and *Ming Pao* (Hong Kong), Feb. 9, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 11, 1991, pp. 10–11.

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US President George Bush meets with China's Minister of Foreign Affairs Qian Qichen (left) and Chinese Ambassador Zhu Qizhen (center) in the White House on November 30, 1990.

—Han Juce from Xinhua.

ton motivated China's cautious policy toward the Gulf crisis, but China's votes in favor of all UN Security Council resolutions on the Iraqi invasion, and its abstention on Resolution 678 (the one authorizing the use of force to expel Iraq from Kuwait) helped to bridge US-PRC disagreements and led to the resumption of high-level meetings—suspended since June 1989—between their representatives.

In September, PRC Minister of Foreign Affairs Qian Qichen met US Secretary of State James Baker at the United Nations. In addition to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and other international issues, they discussed bilateral relations. A second meeting was held between the two foreign ministers in Cairo in early November. Although the two countries disagreed over the use of force against Iraq, the Chinese decided to abstain from voting on Resolution 678. In fact, they did not have much choice. A PRC veto would have enraged the United States and Western Europe and led to an inconceivable deterioration in China's international position that could also have led to domestic economic difficulties, social unrest, and political instability. On the other hand, supporting the use of force would have contradicted China's clearly articulated position that all sides should seek a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis.[13]

Following the vote on the resolution, Qian Qichen was invited to the White House to meet President Bush, a symbolic act of reconciliation. Although the Chinese have consistently denied that they had expected a reward from Washington in return for their abstention—the two issues are independent, stated the PRC ambassador to Saudi Arabia, who saw no justification for linking Sino-American relations with the PRC's fixed position on the Gulf[14]—PRC-US relations have improved because of Chinese cooperation during the Gulf crisis. However, since this improvement was forced by external circumstances rather than reached through a settlement of outstanding bilateral problems, it has taken place on only one level. Most of the economic and political sanctions imposed after June 1989 against the PRC were lifted and its most-favored-nation status was renewed through the consistent efforts of President Bush, despite tough Senate opposition.[15] Yet, mutual suspicions still exist. In China's view, the United States exploited the Gulf crisis to renew its predominance in the oil-rich parts of the Middle East. For its part, Washington continues to be troubled by China's violations of human rights (including using the distractions of the Gulf war to prosecute the leaders of the Tiananmen demonstrations); Beijing's unfair trade practices, which have created a serious deficit in the US trade balance with China; and the sale of Chinese-made arms (particularly short- and intermediate-range missiles) to the Middle East.

The issue of conventional and nuclear arms proliferation in the Third World has aroused increasing international concern as a result of the war. Following the Iraqi invasion, and the UN Security Council's economic and military sanctions against Iraq (Resolution 661), the PRC stopped all arms deliveries to Iraq, its largest customer. However, other Chinese arms sales, to the Middle East and other regions, continued. As soon as the war ended, Washington resumed its pressure on the PRC to stop such sales, particularly of missiles, to the Middle East. This created another dilemma for the PRC. Beijing has come to rely on the income from the sale of arms, especially in markets where China has a relative advantage over its potential competitors. Not only does this income provide a significant input to China's economic and military modernization program but, perhaps even more important, it has also played a significant role in upgrading China's international status.

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[13]On China's position before the vote, see *RMRB* (Overseas Edition), Nov. 29, 1990, and *Hsin Wan Pao* (Hong Kong), Nov. 29, 1990, both trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Nov. 29, 1990, pp. 2–3.

[14]*Al-Sharq al-Awsat* (London), Nov. 25, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Nov. 29, 1991, p. 4.

[15]"A Bush Victory on Chinese Trade Status," *International Herald Tribune*, July 25, 1991. See also "Bush Lifts Science and Technology Embargo on China," *Wen Wei Po* (Hong Kong), Dec. 15, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Dec. 17, 1990, pp. 5–6. Japan, the World Bank, and the European Community had lifted their sanctions earlier.

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However, this upgraded status has, in turn, required the PRC to give up the assets from these arms sales in return for recognition as a full partner to the other great powers in settling major international issues.

China and the UN Security Council. The Gulf crisis has also demonstrated the crucial role of the PRC in the UN Security Council. For many years, the PRC's attitude toward the United Nations was ambivalent. Even after its admission in October 1971, Beijing held that the two superpowers manipulated the UN to promote their own interests. It took the Chinese nearly a decade to overcome their reluctance to take a more active part in the UN, and it was only in the mid-1980's that they fully changed their original assessment. Since then, Beijing has systematically praised the importance of the UN in settling international problems while also extolling its own role as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, and the only representative of the Third World to hold that position.[16]

The Gulf conflict provided the Chinese with a unique opportunity to make their case. First, all activities against Iraq were coordinated and supervised by the United Nations through several Security Council resolutions. Second, it was recognized that China played an instrumental role in reaching these resolutions, sometimes, as in the case of Resolution 678, a crucial role. Indeed, China's vote in the UN Security Council has been a principal source of its new international influence.

Much of China's new influence is, however, still an illusion, not only because opportunities like the Gulf crisis are rare, but also because the PRC did not have much choice but to support, or at least not oppose, the Security Council's resolutions. Nevertheless, it seems that China's agreement to cooperate with the other major powers derived not merely from its desire to manipulate the Gulf crisis in order to rehabilitate its image and lift the sanctions; it also reflected a genuine anxiety about international instability and particularly the damage it might do to international economic relations, and thus to China's modernization drive. China has apparently learned a major lesson from the Gulf crisis—greater international cooperation, including its own, is needed to preclude outbreaks of international violence or to make sure that once they start, they are settled as quickly as possible.

China's Defense Modernization Policy

The Gulf war has had a major impact on China's thinking about its defense modernization policy. Beijing's reassessment of the international situation as a result of the Gulf war, combined with the demonstration of superior Western military technology in the war, resuscitated the debates over defense modernization and military reform that had been all but suspended in China in the aftermath of the Tiananmen massacre.[17] Convinced that the PLA performance in May-June 1989 had exposed political and ideological deficiencies, China's conservative patriarchs had since then launched a series of campaigns aimed at reinforcing the political and ideological dimensions of China's defense modernization and downgrading professional military considerations, using methods reminiscent of Mao Zedong's and Lin Biao's radical policies of the turbulent 1960's. By 1990, the ongoing struggle in the defense establishment between the "reds" and the "experts" had apparently been won by the former group, led by Yang Baibing, secretary general of the CCP Central Military Commission (CMC) as well as director of the PLA General Political Department. However, signs of a counteroffensive led by the "experts" emerged on August 1 (just before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait), on the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of the founding of the Red Army. PRC Minister of Defense Qin Jiwei, an advocate of military professionalism, stressed that the PLA "is determined to make new contributions" in defending the PRC.[18] In a speech commemorating Army Day, CCP Secretary General Jiang Zemin, who is also chairman of the CMC, stated in a much bolder tone:

To ensure a stable environment for socialist modernization we must maintain a strong force and build up strong national defense. . . . If we have a military force whose strength corresponds to our country's status, we will easily deal with whatever contingency that may occur and will remain invincible.[19]

[16]Yitzhak Shichor, "China and the Role of the United Nations in the Middle East: Revised Policy," *Asian Survey* (Berkeley, CA), March 1991, pp. 255–69. On China and the Third World, see Samuel S. Kim, *The Third World in Chinese World Policy*, World Order Studies Program, Occasional Paper No. 19, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Center for International Studies, January 1989; Lillian Craig Harris and Robert L. Worden, Eds., *China and the Third World: Champion or Challenger?* Dover, MA, Auburn, 1986.

[17]Harlan W. Jencks, "Civil-Military Relations in China: Tiananmen and After," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), May-June 1991, pp. 14–29; Richard H. Yang, Ed., *The PLA and the Tiananmen Crisis*, SCPS Papers, No. 1, Sun Yat-Sen Center for Policy Studies, National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, October 1989; A. James Gregor, *The Military in Post-Tiananmen China*, SCPS Papers, No. 3, April 1991.

[18]Lo Ping, "Defense Minister Has Courageously Defeated Generals of the Yang Family," *Kai Fang*, Aug. 15, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Aug. 23, 1990, p. 36.

[19]Quoted in Chen Xiaogong, "World Military Situation in the 1990's," *Jiefangjun bao* (Beijing—hereafter, *JFJB*), Sept. 7, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Sept. 27, 1990, p. 8.

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The need to deal with contingencies, which was downplayed in the 1980's because of the apparent lack of imminent threats, has emerged as an important factor following Iraq's aggression against Kuwait. This conflict has provided Beijing with further proof that whereas the danger of a world war has indeed "diminished," international stability is still far away. China's leaders, both military and civilian, who carefully studied reports and documentary films on the Iraqi invasion experience,[20] have now concluded that the breakdown of the bipolar international system breeds regional tensions that, in turn, lead to instability and, moreover, to local wars.

By late 1990, a deluge of articles, commentaries, and interviews on military modernization was being published, particularly in the PLA organ *Jiefangjun bao* (Liberation Army Daily). In addition, a number of high-level meetings discussed, among other things, the implications of the Iraqi invasion, and later the Gulf war, for the PRC's military modernization. In November-December 1990, at a conference of the PLA General Staff Department, management work, training, combat power, and fighting skills were emphasized. The minutes of this conference were hailed and later circulated by the CMC. They clearly underscored professionalism while making no mention of promoting political education or ideological indoctrination in the PLA.[21]

On January 11, 1991, a secret, enlarged meeting of the party's CMC was reportedly held in Beijing before the offensive against Iraq was launched. Concentrating on the Middle East imbroglio and its significance for China, the meeting finalized future PLA plans for air force and naval modernization, and ordered a further trimming of manpower, as well as an increase in defense expenditures.[22] These plans were translated into concrete policies and officially approved by the Seventh National People's Congress (NPC) at its fourth session held late in March 1991.

These policies reflect changes in a number of areas related to defense. Overarching these changes has been Beijing's fundamentally revised prognosis for the 1990's, according to which military strength would still play a central role in what is called "comprehensive national strength."[23] This new prognosis of the world situation and its potential threat to Chinese security have legitimated the return of the "experts," as well as a remarkable shift in priorities. Whereas until the Gulf crisis, PRC leaders, both military and civilian, had basically agreed on economic modernization as an essential precondition for defense modernization, some of them have now used the Gulf war to put forward the idea that, perhaps, it is the other way around: "Without a strong national defense, there will be neither security nor development to speak of."[24] An associate research fellow at the Academy of Military Sciences, Senior Colonel Liu Yichang, said:

The modernization of socialism in an independent and peaceful way requires strong national defense strength as a guarantee in coping with possible emergencies at all times . . . the modernization of national defense itself is . . . an important guarantee for economic development in the coming decade.[25]

This fundamental change of priorities is supported by the leaders of the "professional" faction in the PRC's defense system, including Chi Haotian, PLA chief of the general staff, who has stated: "A higher defense consciousness is conducive not only to national unity and stronger combat will of the army, but also to the development of the economy."[26]

The main reason behind the resumed debates and the revised priorities has to do with the inferiority of China's defense system as exposed by the Gulf war. The war demonstrated the incompetence of the Iraqi armed forces, equipped by weapons mostly originating in the socialist countries, including the PRC. Reports on the performance of Chinese weapons in the war are not publicly available (although it was reported

[20]Lo Ping, "The CCP Guiding Principles for the Middle East Crisis," *Cheng Ming* (Hong Kong), Sept. 1, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Sept. 5, 1990, p. 15.

[21]Liu Huinian and Hu Nianqiu, "General Staff Headquarters Holds World Conference Calling on Army to Stick to the Criteria for Combat Strength and Achieve High Military Standards," Xinhua, Dec. 4, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Dec. 5, 1990, pp. 27–29. See also Willy Wo-lap Lam, "Army Told to Strengthen Combat Capabilities," *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong—hereafter, *SCMP*), Feb. 6, 1991.

[22]Chen Shao-pin, "Yang Shangkun on the Middle East War and the Tasks of the Three Armed Services," *Ching Pao*, Feb. 10, 1991, pp. 36–37, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 13, 1991, pp. 31–32; Willy Wo-lap Lam, "Army to Receive More Funds, Technology," *SCMP*, Mar. 7, 1991.

[23]Chen Xiaogong, loc. cit., pp. 4–8. On the term "comprehensive national strength," see Yitzhak Shichor, "Defense Policy Reform," in Gerald Segal, Ed., *Chinese Politics and Foreign Policy Reform*, London, Kegan Paul International, 1990, pp. 77–99.

[24]Excerpts from a *JFJB* article by Sa Benwang on the implications of the Gulf crisis on the world military situation, Xinhua, Jan. 11, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Jan. 11, 1991, pp. 1–2.

[25]Interviewed by Luo Xiaobing, "Strengthening National Defense Building Is Important Guarantee for Economic Development," *JFJB*, Feb. 6, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 1, 1991, pp. 33–35.

[26]Alan Nip, "PLA Backs Proposed Defense Budget Increase," *Hongkong Standard*, Mar. 29, 1991. For similar views on the need to reinforce China's defense capabilities, see Xinhua, Mar. 27, 1991, in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 28, 1991, p. 19.

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that a few US Tomahawk cruise missiles were shot down by Chinese-made Iraqi HQIII surface-to-air missiles, and that the British Royal Navy shot down a Chinese-made Iraqi Silkworm anti-ship missile).[27] Also, Chinese generals watched the performance of Western military technology and were reportedly "astonished," "amazed," and "deeply frustrated."[28]

Among the "frustrated" were not only current PLA commanders but also a number of older, retired generals such as former defense minister Zhang Aiping and former chief of staff Yang Dezhi, who all agree that PRC weapons and equipment lag behind those of Western countries by 20, even 30 years.[29] Their requests for additional military research, development, and production funds have finally—because of the Gulf war—been acknowledged and, moreover, supported by such senior leaders as Chen Yun, Secretary General Jiang Zemin, and Prime Minister Li Peng.[30] In his dual role as chairman of the CMC of both the state and the party, Jiang reportedly instructed the Commission for National Defense Science, Technology and Industry to "concentrate its energy on developing sophisticated hi-tech weapons."[31]

Such an effort requires an increase in the defense budget, which the CMC, in its January 1991 meeting, had already recommended. Another CMC enlarged meeting, held in early March, reportedly formulated the final decisions. President Yang Shangkun was quoted saying that, following repeated discussions, the CCP Politburo had unanimously agreed that it was necessary to increase military appropriations and decided to allocate an additional 30 billion yuan (some $6 billion) for military research and production in the next five years.[32] This increase was officially approved at the NPC session in late March.

To upgrade weapons and equipment, both conventional and nuclear, and "to handle unexpected changes in the increasingly complicated international arena," a total of 32.51 billion yuan (approximately $6.5 billion) was allocated for military spending in 1991, an addition of 3.48 billion yuan, or 12 percent over last year's allocation. Although this falls far short of a much larger defense appropriation hoped for by some PLA generals in 1991, it was the first increase in *real terms* for a number of years.[33] This allocation has not been affected by the NPC's decision to slash total state expenditures by 500 million yuan because of an unprecedented 13.35 billion yuan budget deficit.[34] Yang Shangkun promised PLA NPC deputies: "As compared with things ten years ago, national defense appropriations in the period of the Eighth Five-Year Plan will increase by a substantial margin."[35] All these changes will by no means lead to a dramatic transformation in the quality of the PLA. Still, they are significant as an indication of the direction the PRC will follow, at least in the near future.[36]

PRC-ROC Relations

In addition to affecting China's role in global and Middle Eastern politics and influencing trends in defense modernization policy, the Gulf crisis has also had an impact on PRC-ROC relations. First, ROC President Li Teng-hui believed that "the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait had served as a warning to the Republic of China, which faces a potential military threat from Communist China."[37] Indeed, the issue of using force against Taiwan was occasionally discussed by senior PRC leaders not only before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, but also afterwards.[38] CCP Secretary General Jiang Zemin reportedly told a former Japanese deputy prime minister that the PRC reserves the option to take Taiwan by force.[39]

[27]Ho Ta-wei, "Exclusive Report: China-Made Weapons Display Their Might in the Middle East," *Tangtai*, Jan. 26, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 5, 1991, pp. 25–26; "British Navy Downs Iraqi Silkworm," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (New York), Mar. 11, 1991, p. 61.

[28]For example, "US's Warfare Gives Chinese Military an Inferiority Complex," *International Herald Tribune*, Mar. 21, 1991.

[29]Lo Ping, "Old Generals Complain About Deng Delaying Improvement of Weapons, Equipment," *Cheng Ming*, May 1, 1991, pp. 6–9, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, May 7, 1991, pp. 51–55.

[30]Chen Wei-chun, "Army Generals Request Big Increase in Military Expenditures; Jiang Zemin and Li Peng Endorse the Demand," *Kuang Chiao Ching*, Feb. 16, 1991, pp. 11–12, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 15, 1991, pp. 21–23.

[31]*Ching Pao*, Mar. 10, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 11, 1991, p. 26.

[32]Chen Shao-pin, "Inside Story of CPC Increasing Military Spending," *Ching Pao*, Apr. 10, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Apr. 12, 1991, pp. 31–32.

[33]For details: "Seventh National People's Congress, Fourth Session," in *FBIS-CHI Supplement*, June 1, 1991, esp. pp. 12, 29, 38, 64, 66, 68. Also *Beijing Review*, Apr. 15–21, 1991, p. XIII; "Increased Military Spending," *SCMP*, Mar. 25, 1991; "China's Budget Rise," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (London), Apr. 6, 1991, p. 521; "More Guns and Debt in China," *International Herald Tribune*, Mar. 27, 1991.

[34]Willy Wo-lap Lam, "Defense Said Excluded From Spending Cuts," *SCMP*, Apr. 13, 1991.

[35]*JFJB*, Mar. 31, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Apr. 11, 1991, pp. 19–20.

[36]For another interpretation, see Ellis Joffe, *China After the Gulf War*, SCPS Papers, No. 7, May 1991, pp. 6–9. As a matter of fact, there has hardly been any open discussion of military professionalism since the spring of 1991, indicating that political considerations, primarily Mao's military doctrines, prevail yet again, at least outwardly.

[37]*Central News Agency* (Taipei—hereafter, *CNA*), Aug. 10, 1990, in *FBIS-CHI*, Aug. 13, 1990, p. 66.

[38]"CPC Assesses Taiwan's Military Strength—Chen Yun Favors Military Actions Against Taiwan, but Deng Xiaoping Prefers Waiting for Another Year," *Pai Hsing* (Hong Kong), Sept. 1, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Sept. 5, 1990, pp. 23–24.

[39]*CNA*, Sept. 2, 1990, in *FBIS-CHI*, Sept. 6, 1990, p. 8.

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After the outbreak of the war, the ROC placed parts of its armed forces, including the air force, on full alert. The PRC has reacted by accusing the ROC of deliberately creating tension so as to stabilize its domestic situation, divert public attention from the difficulties caused by the crisis, and slow down "reunification efforts."[40]

For its part, the ROC has tried to exploit the Gulf turmoil, and the economic hardships it caused to Middle Eastern countries, in order to gain some advantages at the expense of the PRC. Not required by the United States to share the costs of the military operations in the Gulf, Taipei decided to provide economic assistance through its International Economic Cooperation and Development Fund "to those Middle Eastern countries having good relations with the Republic of China." Jordan, which helped with the evacuation of ROC citizens from Kuwait, topped Taipei's priority list, which also included Egypt and Turkey.[41] While ROC foreign minister Chien Fu insisted that his country expected "nothing in return" for its aid offer of $30 million,[42] relations between Jordan and the ROC obviously improved. When Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan visited Taiwan in November 1990, Beijing reacted furiously:

When establishing diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, the Government of the Kingdom of Jordan declared in explicit terms that it recognized the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government representing the whole Chinese people. Any visit to Taiwan by leaders of those countries having diplomatic relations with China, no matter whether in an official or private capacity, is unacceptable.[43]

In May 1991, in a seemingly defiant reaction to the PRC's threatening tone, King Hussein of Jordan sent his eldest son to the ROC to exchange views on the consolidation of relations between the two countries.[44]

During the Gulf crisis, the ROC had formally opened a new Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Saudi Arabia, in lieu of its embassy that had been closed in July 1990 following the establishment of diplomatic relations between Riyadh and Beijing. Taipei continued and even increased not only its economic but also its diplomatic activities in Saudi Arabia. During this same period, in a drastic change of tune, Taiwan also made gestures toward Israel, and plans were made to open an office in Tunisia.[45]

The PRC, in turn, used the Iraqi invasion to score some points at the expense of the ROC. Beijing quickly offered to represent ROC interests in Iraq and assist in evacuating "compatriots" from Taiwan (as well as from Hong Kong and Macao) who were stranded in Kuwait and Iraq. Despite its earlier disapproval and later embarrassment, the ROC raised no objections and, evidently, displayed relief and appreciation.[46] This was a godsent opportunity for the PRC to assume responsibility for *all* Chinese. "We believe that all overseas Chinese, people from Hong Kong and Macao, are compatriots, Chinese embassies have a duty to protect all its citizens," said a PRC diplomat in Amman. Citizens of Taiwan were presumably included in this protection.[47]

The Gulf crisis also provided incentives for ROC-PRC economic cooperation. The occupation of Kuwait, the ROC's second largest oil supplier, led Taipei to seek out alternate sources of oil. Although Iran agreed to provide the ROC with most of the oil it would have gotten from Kuwait, Taipei clearly now prefers to continue to reduce its dependence on the unpredictable supply of Middle Eastern oil. Under these circumstances, the possibility of turning to the PRC as a regional supplier of crude oil could become more and more attractive to the ROC. Its economics minister stated "that the government would not consider buying crude oil from the Chinese mainland *at the present time*" (emphasis added), for two reasons: strategic (unwillingness to rely on a rival regime) and technical (the high wax content of PRC oil).[48] Yet, in the long run, oil could become another incentive in the ongoing economic integration between the PRC and the ROC.

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[40]Beijing in Mandarin to Taiwan, Feb. 12, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 19, 1991, pp. 56–57. On the ROC Air Force combat readiness since the outbreak of the Gulf war, see Taipei International Service, Jan. 26, 1991, in *FBIS-CHI*, Jan. 29, 1991, p. 60.

[41]*CNA*, Sept. 5, 1991, in *FBIS-CHI*, Sept. 6, 1990, p. 60; Taipei International Service, Mar. 7, 1991, in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 8, 1991, p. 65. Iran was also considered, "as it has taken positive steps to improve economic and trade relations with Taiwan."

[42]*CNA*, Sept. 26, 1990, in *FBIS-CHI*, Sept. 26, 1990, p. 69.

[43]Xinhua, Nov. 14, 1990, in *FBIS-CHI*, Nov. 14, 1990, p. 12.

[44]*CNA*, May 20, 1991, in *FBIS-CHI*, May 21, 1991, p. 72.

[45]Taipei Domestic Service, Feb. 18, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 19, 1991, p. 58; *China Post* (Taipei), Mar. 12, 1991; *CNA*, Feb. 27, 1991, in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 28, 1991, p. 58; Taipei International Service, Feb. 14, 1991, in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 19, 1991, p. 58.

[46]Taipei International Service, Aug. 26, 1990, in *FBIS-CHI*, Aug. 27, 1990, p. 56.

[47]*SCMP*, Aug. 31, 1990; Editorial, "Love for Compatriots, Kindred Feelings," *Wen Wei Po*, Aug. 17, 1990, and "Zhou Nan Expressed Willingness to Help Taiwan Compatriots Stranded in Iraq and Kuwait," *Zhongguo xinwen she* (Beijing), Aug. 16, 1990, both trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Aug. 17, 1990, pp. 38–39.

[48]*CNA*, Aug. 10, 1990, in *FBIS-CHI*, Aug. 10, 1990, p. 42; Lin Pao-hua, "Taiwan Reviews Its Policy Toward the Mainland," *Ming Pao* (Hong Kong), Aug. 13, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Aug. 13, 1990, pp. 66–67. On the possibility that the Gulf crisis may spur Chinese oil exports, particularly to East and Southeast Asia, see *Hongkong Standard*, Sept. 6, 1990; and *Ta Kung Pao*, Jan. 23, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Jan. 31, 1991, pp. 6–7.

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Sino-Israeli Relations

Also accelerated by the Gulf crisis has been the improvement in Sino-Israeli relations. Following the establishment of diplomatic relations between Beijing and Riyadh in July 1990, Israel became the only Middle Eastern country without official representation in Beijing. Since the late 1970's, as a part of their "open door" policy, the Chinese formed unofficial economic, cultural, and scientific relations with Israel, which, in turn, led to occasional political exchanges in the mid- and late 1980's, mainly in the United Nations. This slow, selective process underscored another Chinese dilemma: China's commitments to the Arabs in general and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in particular clashed with its aspiration for greater involvement in Middle Eastern affairs, which required official relations with Israel.[49] The Gulf war has provided China with a way out of this dilemma and with an opportunity to intensify its relations with Israel.

For one thing, the invasion of one Arab country by another, just one year after the end of the Iran-Iraq war, demonstrated to the Chinese that the Arab-Israeli conflict is not the only source of Middle Eastern instability. Implied in Chinese commentaries is a sense of disillusionment and disappointment not merely about the invasion itself but also about the conflicting response of the Arabs and the PLO: "The differences among the Arab countries today are the most serious since 1945."[50]

For another, while they did not say so plainly, the Chinese appreciated Israel's restraint in face of the Iraqi Scud missile attacks on its territory. Xinhua vividly reported on these attacks directly from Tel Aviv and Jerusalem (for the first time). Beijing believes that if Israel had retaliated, the war would have escalated and expanded with disastrous consequences. Beijing was visibly relieved that Israel chose to forego the use of force.[51] Nonetheless, the possibility of Israel's intervention has made the Chinese even more aware of the explosiveness of the Arab-Israeli conflict, "the crux" of the Middle East issue. Yet, Iraq's suggestion to link the settlement of the Gulf conflict with the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict was categorically rejected by the PRC:

There is no reason to confuse UN Security Council Resolution 242 (on resolving the Arab-Israeli issue) and Resolution 678 (on resolving Iraq's occupation of Kuwait). These two resolutions are independent of each other and must not be confused. Iraq has no right to connect these two, nor has the United States any reason to link them.[52]

Such a link would have undoubtedly delayed the end of the Gulf war, against China's interest in a quick resolution of the crisis. This is why China insisted, that these two problems should be settled in order of priority, but also reiterated that without the resolution of the Palestine problem there can be no lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.[53] It was also obvious to the Chinese that as soon as the Gulf crisis was over, international as well as Arab attention would focus on the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.[54] China has not only expressed, since 1984, its wish, right, and duty to take part in such a settlement but, moreover, hinted that once the process is launched, diplomatic relations with Israel could be established. This was made very clear by foreign minister Qian Qichen, who met Israeli foreign minister David Levi in October 1990 at the United Nations:

I said to him that Sino-Israeli relations should be gradually improved along with the development of the peace process in the Middle East. At present, there are no official relations between China and Israel. We only have a travel agency in Tel Aviv. They have a Beijing office of the academy of humanities [sic], which is a non-governmental organization. The establishment of official diplomatic relations can only be possible along with the development of peace in the Middle East.[55]

This message reflects the considerable progress made in China's relations with Israel during and after the Gulf crisis. Following the official opening of the Beijing Liaison Office of the Israeli Academy of Sciences

[49]Yitzhak Shichor, *Small Cracks in the Great Wall: The Prospects for Sino-Israeli Relations*, Research Report No. 5, London, Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1987; Julian M. Sobin, "The China-Israel Connection: New Motivations for Rapprochement," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* (Medford, MA), Winter 1991, pp. 111–25.

[50]Xu Boyuan, "Roundup: Mideast Crisis Has Shaken the Arab World," Xinhua, Sept. 9, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Sept. 10, 1990, pp. 4–5.

[51]Yue Dun, "New Focus of the Gulf War," *Gongren ribao* (Beijing), Jan. 21, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 5, 1991, pp. 5–6; Xinhua (from Tel Aviv), Feb. 11, 1991, in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 12, 1991, p. 10; Xinhua (from Jerusalem), Feb. 19, 1991, in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 20, 1991, pp. 7–8.

[52]Editorial, "How the United States Devises a Postwar Mideast 'New Order'," *Ta Kung Pao*, Mar. 20, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 20, 1991, pp. 1–2. See also interview with PRC vice foreign minister Tian Zengpei, *Handelsblatt* (Düsseldorf), Dec. 10, 1990, p. 9, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Dec. 13, 1990, p. 3, and Xinhua, Feb. 18, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 19, 1991, pp. 2–3.

[53]Xinhua, Feb. 21, 1991, in *FBIS-CHI*, Feb. 21, 1991, pp. 2–3.

[54]Qian Wenrong, "Commentary: It Is High Time for Solving the Middle East Issue," and Li Sizhi, "Roundup: Solving the Arab-Israeli Conflict Has Been Placed on the Agenda Again," Xinhua, Mar. 8, 1991, both trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 11, 1991, pp. 2–3.

[55]"Qian Qichen Speaks on China's Relations with South Korea, Israel, and Vatican," *Zhongguo xinwen she*, Oct. 7, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Oct. 9, 1990, p. 2.

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and Humanities in late 1990, the PRC agreed to upgrade its status. In early 1991, a veteran Israeli ambassador was sent as an "adviser" to the head of the Liaison Office, whose staff was expanded considerably. Later, in March, Reuven Merhav, director general of the Israeli foreign ministry, arrived in China on a visit hastily termed "private" by his hosts. Yet, he reportedly met with senior PRC foreign ministry officials, including the deputy foreign minister.[56] Asked about the normalization of Sino-Israeli relations, Minister of Foreign Affairs Qian Qichen said:

China and Israel have exchanged some offices. That is to say, the Israeli Academy of Sciences has established an office in Beijing, while the Chinese Administration of Tourism has established an office in Israel. Except for this, there is no political tie between China and Israel. Recently, an Israeli official visited China in his private capacity. There is no such thing as establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries.[57]

Not yet, at least. But other relations, including perhaps military relations (reflecting the renewed Chinese emphasis on defense modernization), have been considerably expanded since the eruption of the Gulf war.[58] Once an Arab-Israeli peace process begins, in whatever form, diplomatic relations between Israel and the PRC are no longer inconceivable. Deng Xiaoping himself made this clear in an interview held in early March. According to diplomatic sources in Beijing, diplomatic relations between China and Israel could be established before the end of 1991.[59]

[56]David Dukes, "Merhav's Baggage on His China Visit," *Jerusalem Post*, Mar. 14, 1991; Jerusalem Domestic Service, Mar. 26, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 27, 1991, pp. 3–4; *SCMP*, Mar. 27, 1991.

[57]Beijing Central Television Program, Mar. 27, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Mar. 27, 1991, p. 41; *RMRB* (Overseas Edition), Mar. 28, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, Apr. 2, 1991, p. 16. Two senior Israeli foreign ministry officials met with Qian Qichen in Beijing in October.

[58]*Hongkong Standard*, Feb. 21, 1991; *SCMP*, May 18, 1991; Robert Freedman, "The Israel-China Connection, *Jerusalem Post*, Mar. 18, 1991.

[59]Chen Chieh-hung, "Deng Xiaoping's Recent Talk on China's Diplomatic Line," *Ching Pao*, June 10, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-CHI*, June 6, 1991, p. 3.

Conclusion

China's policy toward the Gulf crisis can be interpreted in three different ways. My discussions with officials and researchers during a recent visit to the PRC revealed that some consider the policy a great success. According to their positive assessment, China acted cautiously with minimal risks, by following a trail blazed by others, but in complete conformity with its own interests. Consequently, Beijing managed to preserve, and even promote, relations with all parties involved, Iraq included. A second view holds that "the Gulf crisis has seriously damaged China's position in the Middle East," and adds: "In trying to please everybody, the Chinese have displeased many."[60]

It seems to me that both of these interpretations are somewhat overstated. Any damages suffered by China as a result of the war, whether political, economic, or military, are bound to be short term. If a few of the anti-Saddam Arab coalition countries, notably Kuwait and Egypt, are a little disappointed in China's actions, all will be forgiven and forgotten sooner rather than later, as in the past. Estimated at $2–4 billion, the economic cost to China as a result of the war would lead to greater caution toward countries like Iraq, and greater diversification of foreign economic relations, especially labor export and construction services.

If China's policy toward the Gulf crisis can by no means be considered a serious failure, neither can it be regarded as a great success. According to the third view, the Chinese chose to go half the way, and they have achieved half the results. Knocked off the gameboard of international politics since Tiananmen, China used the Gulf crisis to rejoin the game only by going back to square one. Sitting on the fence and watching the tigers fight, China still plays a marginal role in world affairs. A more central role in world affairs will probably only become possible after China's current aging rulers are replaced by younger, more daring leaders.

[60]Lillian Craig Harris, "The Gulf Crisis and China's Middle East Dilemma," *The Pacific Review*, No. 2, 1991, p. 116.

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Moscow's Retreat from Cuba

Cole Blasier

For 30 years, the Soviet Union and Cuba maintained an exceptionally close relationship, notable for the size of Soviet aid and trade, the mutuality of international interests, and the interdependence of military policies. By 1991, however, this relationship had deteriorated significantly. Not only did the Soviet Union's own economic crises lead to a sharp decline in Moscow's ability to support the Cuban economy, but Soviet political and strategic interests also no longer seemed to require close cooperation with the Castro regime. Beginning in December 1990, Moscow began to cut its aid programs to the bone and, after the failed coup the following August, it moved to withdraw military forces, thereby gutting the basis of the 30-year Soviet-Cuban partnership. Why did this relationship become so close, what were its principal features, and why has it now fallen apart?

Origins of Partnership

When Fidel Castro came to power at the beginning of 1959, the United States promptly recognized him, raised the possibility of economic assistance, and attempted to moderate conflicts through negotiations. However, as Castro consolidated the new government, and quelled opposition parties, he became increasingly critical of the United States, and relations between the two governments deteriorated. In the spring of 1960, the Eisenhower administration decided to continue the ban on arms sales to Cuba that it had initiated against the Batista regime, and to end US sugar purchases. At the same time, the US companies that controlled Cuba's oil refineries refused to make further deliveries because of Cuba's payments arrearages. Many observers believed that no Cuban government could long survive without access to sugar markets, oil, and arms.[1]

During the first year of Castro's rule, the USSR maintained a very low profile; it initiated only a few contacts with the new Cuban government and did not establish diplomatic relations until May 1960. Nevertheless, when faced with economic strangulation, Castro decided to send envoys to the USSR in the summer of 1960 in hopes of securing Soviet help. Castro was the wooer, the USSR the wooed.

Soviet interest in the Castro regime was based on the assumption that the United States posed a military threat—waxing and waning, but permanent—to the Soviet Union.[2] US nuclear capabilities made this threat a frightening reality. Also, the intense competition between the capitalist and socialist systems was viewed as an historic struggle, winner take all.

Nikita Khrushchev could not resist a chance to score points against the US in the global political and strate-

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[1]To supplement this brief summary on Cuba's establishment of close ties with the USSR, see my *The Hovering Giant, U.S. Response to Revolutionary Change in Latin America,* Pittsburgh, PA, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985, pp. 177–202.

[2]Vladimir I. Stenchenko, "The Soviet Role in Central America," *The Washington Quarterly* (Washington, DC), Summer 1990, pp. 193–94. See also idem., "Soviet Views of the Caribbean and Central America, 1985–1991," prepared for the Latin American Studies Association congress, Washington, DC, June 1990.

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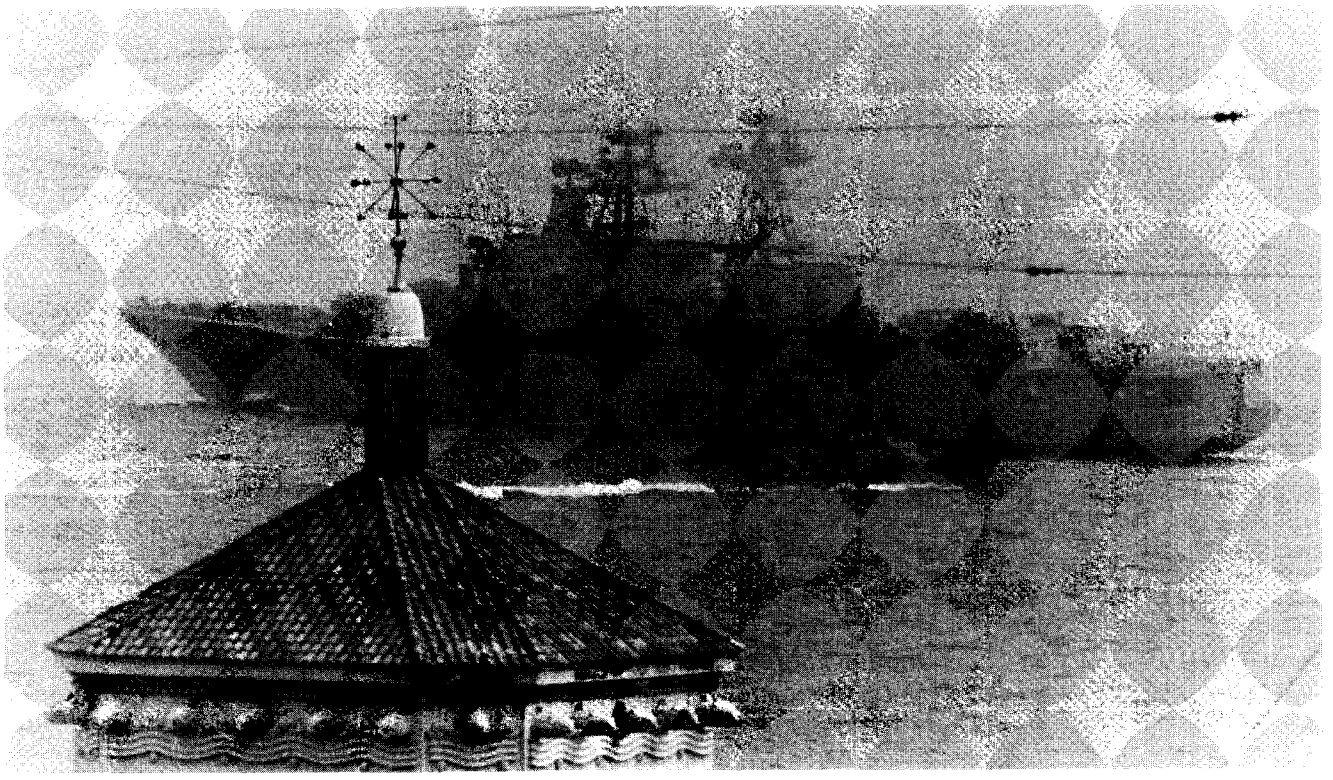
gic struggle by developing close relations with a country 90 miles from the Florida coast, by establishing the first Marxist-Leninist regime in the Western hemisphere, and by laying the groundwork for fresh political adventures in Latin America. Also, various Soviet elites saw a Cuban tie as an opportunity to expand their staffs and pursue their global pretensions. Finally, party leaders could point to a relationship with Cuba as a symbol of the continuing vitality of the communist movement —it was seen as giving a big boost to Soviet prestige worldwide.

Although the commitments the Soviet Union made to Cuba were trumpeted in the communist world as an anti-imperialist gesture in the tradition of proletarian internationalism, in fact, perhaps the most important Soviet motive was strategic. The military objectives of Soviet strategy were threefold: to counter US military power in the Western hemisphere, to serve as a restraint on US actions elsewhere, and to bolster military and strategic parity with the United States. Cuba also offered the USSR an opportunity to establish its first military foothold in the Western hemisphere. Several thousand members of the Soviet armed forces were eventually stationed there, some as a garrison, others as technical advisers. Finally, Cuba was a venue for the Soviet armed forces, allowing occasional naval and air visits.

The Partnership's Main Features

Soviet-Cuban relations were based on tradeoffs. The Soviet side provided economic assistance sufficient to keep the Cuban economy afloat. Military assistance was meant to provide a deterrent against US attack without any explicit Soviet defense guarantee. What the Cuban relationship offered the USSR in return was a foothold inside the US sphere, a strategic forward move in the global struggle. Castro was expected to maintain an anti-imperialist (read anti-US) posture. The Soviet-Cuban deal was similar in some ways to US arrangements with Tito in Yugoslavia, where the US acquired a foothold in Eastern Europe against Stalin.

From the Soviet side, other aspects of the Cuban response were frosting on the cake, but frosting that helped justify high levels of Soviet aid. In order to strengthen his relationship with Moscow and ensure a continuing flow of assistance, Castro took the initiative to support Moscow in a number of arenas, such as China, Africa, the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, etc. Castro also supported various revolutionary groups in Latin America, but Moscow was sometimes more annoyed than pleased by these actions. In the 1960's, Castro stubbornly followed independent do-



The Soviet aircraft carrier Leningrad puts to sea from Havana harbor in 1984.

—AP/Wide World.

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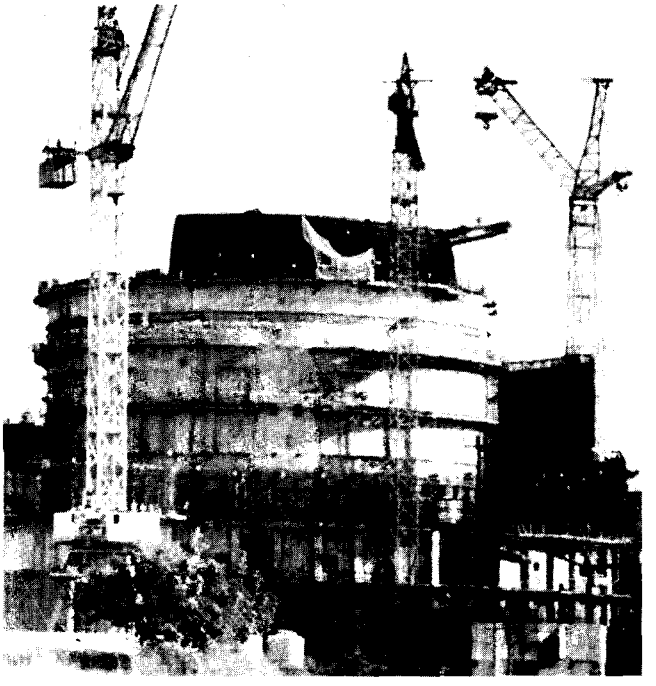

The Soviet-aided construction of a nuclear power plant in Juragua, Cienfuegos, Cuba.

—Reuters/Bettmann.

mestic economic policies, most of which were conspicuous failures—so much so that by the 1970's, when Castro moved to adopt Soviet models for the Cuban system, it was as much an effort to save Cuban socialism as to please Moscow. What was remarkable about the Soviet-Cuban relationship was that their interests converged on so many, if not all, issues.

Economic aid. In the three decades that followed the USSR's taking on of Cuba as a client state, the USSR bought most of Cuba's exports, especially sugar and nickel, and supplied most of its oil, arms, imported food, and manufactures. The USSR also financed bilateral trade deficits. Soviet aid often constituted the equivalent of 15 to 20 percent of the Cuban domestic social product. Cuba, meanwhile, paid almost nothing in interest or principal on its debt to the USSR, which by the 1990's, totaled over 15 billion rubles, a figure that did not include grants and subsidized prices for sugar, nickel, and oil. Moreover, a substantial portion of the Soviet maritime fleet was tied up in trade with Cuba.[3]

Soviet technical assistance flowed to Cuba on a massive scale from the 1960's into the 1980's in the form of grants, compensation agreements, credits, joint collaboration, and the like. Although random information about these projects has been available for many years, it has been difficult to find comprehensive reports of them from which generalizations can be drawn. Two researchers, A. P. Bekarevich and N. M. Kukharev, report in a recent study that the scope of Soviet projects with Cuba was remarkably broad.[4] Indeed, it might have equaled or exceeded that of US projects during the Alliance for Progress. They identified projects involving agro-business, electric power, mining, machine-building, chemical and light industry, transport, communications, as well as education and health. What their reports lack is information on how many of these projects were completed and with what success. The 1985–90 Five Year Plan called for Soviet aid in the amount of 2.5 billion rubles, that is, about 500 million rubles a year.[5]

The value of Soviet aid has long been difficult to determine. One revealing aspect of the numbers game in the Soviet Union is the fact that many Soviet analysts have long relied on calculations of Soviet aid to Cuba, as well as of other subjects, made by the US Central Intelligence Agency. In this matter, as in arms negotiations, compartmentalization—that is, restrictions for security reasons on sharing information within the Soviet government—has forced many Soviet analysts to rely on CIA figures; they do not have access to any others. Secrecy crippled Soviet analysis and impeded policy-making.

Soviet analysts typically assert that the CIA figures are too high not so much because of deliberate misrepresentation but because of methodological errors in the calculations. They point out that calculating the Soviet subsidy as the difference between the Soviet price and the world market price exaggerates the amount of that aid. Such comparisons do not take into account the fact that much of the world's sugar is traded above world market prices. Also, prices of many items supplied to Cuba are artificial since Soviet machinery and equipment, for example, are priced arbitrarily, not by the market. Moreover, the peso and ruble have long been valued at a dollar or more, far in excess of their value on free market exchanges. In the end, however, although the actual amount of economic aid that Cuba has received may be lower than many estimates, the undeniable fact remains that Soviet aid has been huge.

Although Soviet colleagues have claimed that certain Gosplan specialists in fact know the true costs of Soviet aid, my own view is that there is no way of knowing what aid to Cuba has cost the USSR. This is not be-

[3]*Pravda* (Moscow), Apr. 8, 1990.

[4]A. D. Bekarevich and N. M. Kukharev, *Sovetskiy Soyuz-Kuba: ekonomicheskoye sotrudnichestvo* (The Soviet Union-Cuba: Economic Cooperation), Moscow, Nauka, 1990, pp. 5–20, and especially, 12–13.

[5]N. G. Zaitsev, "*Perestroyka* and Perspectives on Soviet–Latin American Relations," *Latinskaya Amerika* (Moscow), No. 1, 1990, pp. 20–22.

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cause of an absence of data but simply because there has been no way of accurately determining value in the absence of a market system. In fact, one Soviet objective in the December 1990 agreement to determine trade accounts using world market prices in dollars may have been to establish market values, and thereby get a better grip on what aid to Cuba was costing.

With real costs unknown, or known only to a small circle, Soviet resources in the 1960's, 1970's, and 1980's seemed sufficient to cover aid to Cuba. Also, Moscow had an expansionist policy in the Third World throughout these decades and was somehow hoping for the achievement of successes there that had eluded it in the advanced industrialized countries. All these factors, plus continuing misplaced faith in the efficacy of the Soviet system itself, blinded the Soviet leadership to the limitations of the Cuban geo-economic situation and to the applicability of Soviet socialism to Cuban problems.

Soviet policies toward Cuba tended to shape Soviet analysis of the Cuban situation rather than the reverse. An example of political censorship was the editorial treatment of my participation in a round table exchange that appeared in a Soviet journal in 1979.[6] My explicit references to Cuban dependence on the USSR for oil, arms, and other imports were deleted although that dependence could clearly be inferred from the text. Dependence on the USSR became the central reality of the Cuban economy, but Soviet media were not allowed to admit this publicly.

Military aid. Moscow extended such large economic assistance to Cuba in no small measure because of the strategic advantages Cuba offered the Soviet Union in the continuing military confrontations of the cold war. The island was a counter to American bases in Europe, and a supply point and stopover for Soviet aircraft and naval ships in the Caribbean. The huge Soviet electronic listening post at Lourdes provided massive access to communications in the United States.

Throughout the last three decades, the USSR frequently tried to leave the impression that it would spring to Cuba's defense in the event of an armed attack by the United States. Yet, never in all that time did Moscow directly commit itself to the use of force to defend Cuba, i.e., it did not enter into a military alliance with Havana. Soviet leaders never believed that Cuba was worth a nuclear war, as they dramatically demonstrated in the Missile Crisis. They were also leery of a military alliance with Castro, who they felt was an obstreperous political ally.

Although Castro resented the absence of a defensive alliance, he sought to curry Moscow's favor, and reciprocated Soviet aid through his actions in the Third World. This was marked in Cuban armed intervention, with Soviet logistical and financial support, in Angola and Ethiopia as well as in Castro's leading role in the Non-Aligned Movement. Castro was politically more flamboyant than the Soviets and although he sometimes acted on his own initiative, Moscow's far greater political and economic power made the Soviet-Cuban relationship an asymmetrical one.

The Soviet and Cuban governments have revealed little information on Soviet military aid to Cuba, but widely available information about the composition of the Cuban armed forces confirms that most of Cuba's modern military equipment is of Soviet origin.[7] Following Gorbachev's announcement in September 1991 that the USSR would withdraw troops from Cuba, *Izvestiya* quoted the United Press International as saying that there were 12,700 Soviet citizens in Cuba: 2,800 soldiers, 2,800 military advisers, 2,100 intelligence staff, and about 5,000 civilian specialists.[8] A Moscow radio commentator reported that according to CIA estimates, the USSR has spent a total of US$43 billion on the Cuban armed forces.[9]

US specialists have estimated that economic and military aid in 1984 alone may have been as high as $5.6 billion or $15.4 million a day.[10] Assistant Secretary of State Bernard Aronson has put Soviet economic and military aid as high as $5 billion annually, or the "equivalent of about one-fifth of the total production of the Cuban economy." In 1990, he estimated the total aid figure at $4.5 billion, with $3.5 billion devoted to development aid, trade credits, and subsidies and $1 billion devoted to military aid. This represents a decline for the year 1990—Aronson had estimated military aid at roughly $1.3 billion annually from 1985 to 1990.[11]

In spite of the high costs of economic and military aid to Cuba, and the international complications it caused, the Soviet-Cuban relationship continued for some 30 years because of the broad support it had

[6]"The Carter Administration and Latin America (A Round Table)," *ibid.*, No. 4, 1979, pp. 130–35.

[7]See The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1986–1987*, London, 1986, pp. 184–85.

[8]*Izvestiya* (Moscow), Sept. 13, 1991, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-SOV*), Sept. 16, 1991, p. 19.

[9]*FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 25, 1991, p. 14.

[10]Carmelo Mesa-Lago and Fernando Gil, "Soviet Economic Relations with Cuba," in Eusebio Mujal-Leon, Ed., *The USSR and Latin America*, Boston, MA, Unwin Hyman, 1989, p. 188. This and other works by Mesa-Lago are the best sources on Cuban-Soviet economic relations.

[11]Statement of Bernard Aronson, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs before the Sub-Committee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, House of Representatives, July 11, 1991, pp. 9, 11.

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Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Cuban President Fidel Castro in Havana in April 1989.

—AP/Wide World.

among Soviet military, intelligence, and party elites, and especially because of the personal vanity and global pretensions of the communist leadership, and its ability to extract surpluses from the Soviet budget for Cuba without legislative or popular approval.

Reevaluation of Soviet Policy

After 1985, the Soviet relationship with Cuba began to deteriorate. By April 1989, when Mikhail Gorbachev visited Havana, the strains between the two countries, and between Gorbachev and Castro personally, became public. Up until 1989, there had been, however, little room for a comprehensive reevaluation of that relationship. Most Soviets justified their relationship with Castro on strategic and ideological grounds. Moreover, any reevaluation undertaken in the Soviet Union would have been seen as a challenge to existing policy, opponents of which were subject to harsh sanctions.

Nor did Castro want a reevaluation. He had an enormous stake in the status quo, and was a vigilant enforcer of ideological and political orthodoxy not only in Cuba but wherever his influence reached. Thus, Soviet analysts were particularly fearful about breaching political orthodoxy regarding Cuba. Soviet leaders could be counted on, in response to Cuban complaints, to discipline Soviet writers critical of Cuba. Many Soviet specialists wrote with relative freedom about much of Latin America, but when it came to Cuba, walked on eggs.

This began to change in the late 1980's as the USSR moved toward *glasnost'* and *perestroyka* in response to the secular and apparently irreversible slowdown in Soviet economic growth. The Soviet leadership under Gorbachev reached the painful and unavoidable conclusion that Soviet socialism was preventing the Soviet Union from catching up with the United States, Japan, and Europe and, indeed, that it was causing it to fall farther and farther behind. This line of reasoning called for pragmatism, or, at the least, making Soviet policies work better. In this context, many drains on the Soviet budget—including Cuba—came under scrutiny.

In the late 1980's, reform-minded Soviet newspapers made aid to Cuba a public issue. At the first session of the USSR Congress of Peoples' Deputies, Nikolay P. Shmelev, an economist in the USSR Academy of Sciences, called attention to aid to Cuba, especially sugar subsidies, as a place to economize.[12]

[12](Fn. 12 follows on p. 96.)

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Glasnost' made it possible to inform the Soviet public about the costs of aid to Cuba for the first time. It was virtually unknown, for example, that Cuba was, by a wide margin, the USSR's largest debtor.[13] Among the occasional articles critical of the policy toward Cuba is one that appeared in late 1990:

. . . Now I want to ask questions about the Republic of Cuba that have escaped Soviet citizens. I want to ask our president, the chairman of the Supreme Soviet—what resources have we invested in Cuba in the last 30 years? How does one measure our military aid to this country? How much does Cuba owe us, and how much have we given the Republic without requiring compensation? And how many more years will the leadership of the Soviet Union gather a part of the share of the poor and downtrodden peasantry and workers to pay off and support an ineffective and militarized economy of a distant government from across the ocean? There are many questions. One would want to receive clear answers to them. But, while there are none, it is necessary to turn to materials of the Western press, partly American.[14]

Increasingly penetrating Soviet examinations of Moscow's policy toward Cuba also raised other perplexing questions. If the Cuban economy could not stand on its own feet after 30 years of Soviet assistance, when could it do so? Many projects begun with Soviet aid were behind schedule, had been abandoned, or were inefficient and operated at huge losses. Castro's dependence on Soviet markets had, if anything, increased.

The immediate stimulus for this sort of questioning of the Cuban-Soviet relationship was the failing Soviet economy. With growth rates declining, the Soviet Union was unable to shoulder the burden of aid to Cuba and other client states without excessive strain.

Gorbachev's New Thinking in foreign affairs also played a role in the Soviet retreat from Cuba. In coming to terms with new economic and political realities, New Thinking led the Soviet leadership to revise its perceptions of the military threat to the Soviet Union. Most important, the United States was no longer viewed as a military competitor of the USSR. The US did not take military advantage of this weakness; in fact, Washington supported Moscow on many issues[15] out of fear that a Soviet collapse might destabilize Europe and pose nuclear dangers for the United States. Hence, just as perceived strategic interests led Moscow to Cuba, so the new perceptions of these interests caused it to withdraw.

Finally, expansive foreign policies and the large institutional superstructures they required were dependent on the continued viability of the Soviet and Cuban economies. When they began to falter, Soviet-Cuban relations had to be reexamined as did Soviet policies generally.

The Soviet leadership now appears to regard arms control agreements and good relations with the US as a better guarantee of Soviet security than access to Cuban air and naval bases. US markets, capital, and technology can do more for the USSR than the needy Cuban economy. Also, the USSR does not expect the US to launch an armed attack against Cuba; President Bush has made explicit assurances on this point.

Cutting Aid, Continuing Trade

Under these circumstances, Soviet leaders decided to reduce sharply their aid to Cuba, a policy formalized in an agreement in December 1990. During the first half of 1991, official Soviet policy sought to reassure Castro that the USSR was still a sympathetic partner and was prepared to the extent of its capabilities to provide help to Cuba. However, an internal policy struggle raged among Soviet leaders over this issue, with those who wanted to cut back still more on commitments in Cuba gaining the advantage, primarily because their policies cost less.

The Soviet aid that has been most crucial for Cuba has been petroleum deliveries, which constitute about 90 percent of Cuban consumption, and are essential for the functioning of the Cuban economy. In order to help Cuba meet the need for more foreign exchange, the USSR has in the past permitted Cuba to re-sell unused petroleum "savings" for hard currency. Until recently, Cuba was receiving about 13 million tons of petroleum at below world market prices, using about 10 million tons for domestic consumption, and selling the

[12] *Stenograficheskiy otchet, pervyy S'ezd Narodnykh Deputatov SSSR, 25 maya–9 iyunia 1989 g.* (Stenographic Report, The First Congress of USSR People's Deputies, May 25–June 9, 1989), Vol. III, Moscow, 1989, p. 54. See also A. Novikov, "From Fidel's Personal Life," *Komsomol'skaya Pravda* (Moscow), Oct. 18, 1990, for a story on Castro's children, wives, mistresses, and high living style.

[13] *Stenograficheskiy otchet,* op. cit., p. 3.

[14] *Rabochaya Tribuna* (Moscow), Nov. 10, 1990. There are, however, special studies on this subject which are not in the open literature but whose information can be conveyed through interviews with Soviet specialists. In fact, much of this article is based on several dozen interviews with specialists on Cuba: diplomatic and trade officials, a legislative deputy, journalists, university faculty, and researchers from the Academy of Sciences. Those interviews probed the current Soviet crisis and changes in Soviet policy toward Cuba.

[15] President Bush's remarks at the opening of the Moscow summit meeting, *The New York Times,* July 31, 1991.

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rest for hard currency. A predicted decline in Soviet oil production has ended Soviet generosity. The USSR Ministry of Oil and Gas Industry reports that Soviet oil production will begin to fall rapidly in about two years.[16] Consequently, in the face of declining oil production and severe economic problems at home, the Soviets negotiated a new economic framework in an agreement announced on December 31, 1990.

The principle was established that economic relations should be governed by mutual interests (meaning Soviet as well as Cuban). This new bilateral framework has the following major elements:

- A sharp cut of at least 3 millon tons in Soviet annual deliveries of petroleum and petroleum products to Cuba—in other words, about what the Cubans have been re-selling on the free market for hard currency. These sales constituted Cuba's major source of such currency. Under the agreement, the Soviet Union wished to maintain deliveries of oil and oil products at the 10 million-ton level,[17] about the level of Cuba's 1990 consumption, but this is subject to Soviet ability to maintain output and distribution in 1991, and there was no agreement for 1992. One specialist on Cuba informed me that in spite of the agreement, the USSR would supply only about 7 million tons in 1991.
- Clearing commodity exchanges expressed in world market prices in dollars. As a first step, as specified in the December 1990 agreement between the two countries, the USSR will pay the equivalent of about R500 per ton of sugar as compared to the more recent figure of R850.[18] In an interview in July 1991, a Soviet economist informed me that the USSR now pays about the same premium price for sugar as US buyers. The practice of Cuba purchasing foreign sugar with loan guarantees by the USSR in order to meet Cuban obligations for sugar deliveries to the USSR has also been ended. Also, the ratio of the amount of oil Cuba receives for sugar shipped to the USSR has been declining: three tons of oil for each ton of sugar in 1989; 2.5 tons in 1990, and less in 1991.[19] In apparent compensation for these cuts, Moscow promised an increase in Soviet grain deliveries.
- Reduction of the bilateral economic agreement from five years to one year (1991) with terms subject to change to take account of the uncertain economic situation in the Soviet Union. The 1991 arrangement constitutes a transitional year, after which more permanent arrangements may be made. In the future, commercial operations for machinery and equipment must be conducted through individual enterprises in the new decentralized Soviet system—enterprises which do not match up with Cuba's centralized ministerial structures. After March 31, 1991, such agreements were to be denominated in dollars. The agreement also prohibits any new Soviet deliveries of consumer durables, like refrigerators and other electrical appliances. Cuba is now to pay 10 percent of shipping costs, which, in the past, were totally borne by the USSR.[20]
- On January 11, 1991, the Supreme Soviet approved grants to Cuba in the amount of 55.7 million rubles. Only Afghanistan received more such foreign aid.[21] By early 1991, the USSR had reduced the number of technicians and advisers in little more than a year from 3,200 to about 1,000.[22]
- The USSR has provided the Cuban army, air force, and navy with almost all of their arms and equipment free of charge; Cuba has lacked the means to pay. In addition, the USSR has maintained several thousand military advisers in Cuba as well as a roughly equivalent amount of garrison troops, a costly program indeed. Negotiations between the two governments were scheduled for late 1991 to arrange Soviet force reductions, and surely, also, cuts in military aid.

Conflicting Elites—The August Coup

The controversy over Cuba has been simmering inside the USSR at least since Gorbachev's visit in 1989. Official policy has been to protect the long-term Soviet political investment in Cuba even though it has become increasingly clear that Cuba is less important to the USSR than the USSR is to Cuba.

In this debate, the "conservatives" probably wanted to keep as much of the old Stalinist system as possible. Identifying the "conservatives" is more an art than a science, and they differ among themselves in disconcerting ways. Nonetheless, the conventional wisdom is that the core of this group was found among the military,[23] intelligence officers, and party traditionalists, elements of which failed to unseat Gorbachev in August 1991. The core group's attachment to the old order is explained by the salaries, perquisites, and status they en-

[16] *Narodnyy Deputat* (Moscow), August 1990, p. 34.
[17] *EFE* (Madrid), Jan. 19, 1991.
[18] *Trud* (Moscow), Apr. 18, 1990.
[19] Aronson, op. cit., p. 10.
[20] *EFE*, Jan. 19, 1991. See *Pravda*, Apr. 8, 1990, for a critical article about high costs of Soviet shipping to Cuba.
[21] Vladimir Neklesov of Novosti, "Cuba—A Moral Debt of the USSR," *El Espectador* (Bogotá, Colombia), Jan. 19, 1991.
[22] *The Washington Post*, Jan. 27, 1991; *EFE*, Mar. 2, 1991.
[23] The organ of the Ministry of Defense, for example, carried two articles, sentimental and patriotic in tone, strongly anti-American, in favor of the Castro regime and the maintenance of the "traditions" of Soviet-Cuban relations. See *Krasnaya Zvezda* (Moscow), May 8 and 10, 1990.

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joyed under that system as well as by their ideological attachment to discipline, order, national pride,[24] and the global reach of Soviet power.

Not surprisingly, the conservatives in the Soviet Union have been the major supporters of Soviet aid to Cuba. Many intelligence and military people have had close ties to the Cuban elite, with whom they have collaborated for more than a generation, and some, like N. S. Leonov, the KGB general, have had a particularly strong emotional and personal tie to Cuba.[25] However, many other conservatives' views of aid to Cuba are shaped more by their attachment to the old system than fondness for Cuba. They see no important place for themselves in the new system, while, under the old, they knew with fair accuracy what they could expect, and how they would come out. Like their compatriots assigned to other countries, Soviet citizens sent to Cuba have had preferential access to hard currency and foreign products, and non-material rewards. Also, conservatives, proud of the USSR's status as a superpower and deeply disillusioned by the morass in which the Soviet Union now finds itself, viewed continuing strong ties with Cuba as a sign of the viability of the old system.

The reformists, who reflect a wide and shifting spectrum of Soviet opinion, and who are sprinkled among management, the professions, academe, and the arts, favor decentralization and privatization. This group closely links restructuring of the economy and democratization. By the spring of 1991, they had become increasingly impatient with Gorbachev's domestic policies, indecisiveness, and dependence on the conservatives, and were, with some exceptions, solidly behind the policies of Boris Yel'tsin, who had come out in May 1990 in favor of "substantial reduction of assistance to other countries."[26] Their ideological, political, and economic predilections caused the reformists to urge the continued restructuring of Soviet relations with Cuba.

Unlike the conservatives, the reformists believe that the Castro regime—personalist, totalitarian, politically repressive, and economically dependent—is precisely the sort of government the USSR should not be supporting.[27] Looking back on the history of Soviet-Cuban relations, they wonder what permanent Soviet interests have been advanced in this relationship. Not only do they have no desire to save Cuban socialism as such, they doubt fresh infusions of Soviet assistance could do it anyway. In any case, they feel resources are desperately needed at home and will be better spent there. The reformists have the edge long term because the Soviet economy will have great difficulty providing aid to Cuba in the foreseeable future.

The failed coup of August transformed Soviet politics and Soviet policy toward Cuba. The conservatives were discredited and brushed aside, and the reformists gained what appears to be full control of policy toward Cuba. Until the August coup, the USSR stood balanced on the line between old and new; since then, it has been plunged into an uncertain search for the new. The widespread repudiation of the old authoritarian system that followed the coup's collapse gutted the pro-Castro forces among the old guard.

In the post-coup setting, elimination of aid to Cuba ceased to be a potential foreign policy embarrassment and came to be viewed as progressive by reformists. Castro's Soviet defenders were out of the picture at least temporarily, and the authoritarian nature of the Cuban regime became a legitimate reason to cut Soviet aid.

Gorbachev's unexpected announcement of September 12, 1991, that many Soviet troops would be withdrawn from Cuba was a staggering blow to the Castro regime not so much because of its immediate practical importance, but because of its symbolic and political implications.[28] On top of the December 1990 aid cutbacks, the troop withdrawal spelled the end of Cuba's status as a favored client of the USSR. It must now continue largely on its own. The Soviet military withdrawal from Cuba was both an economy move, and a political move to placate the United States as a highly valued political partner. In addition, Soviet leaders must have been aware that troop withdrawals cut Soviet vulnerabilities and involvements should any nasty civil strife precede the fall of the Castro regime.

The Future of Soviet-Cuban Relations

Until the coup, the Soviet posture made a virtue of necessity by shoring up appearances globally and reassuring conservatives at home about continuities in Soviet policy. In spite of its own societal crisis and the obvious blow it dealt to Cuba, the Soviet leadership opt-

[24]In *Pravda*, Apr. 8, 1990, a reader says aid to Cuba should be matter of pride not remorse. Further problems are described in ibid., Apr. 9, 1990.

[25]*Latinskaya Amerika*, No. 1, 1979, pp. 5–7. See also Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievski, *KGB: The Inside Story of Its Foreign Operations from Lenin to Gorbachev*, New York, Harper Collins, 1990, p. 466 passim.

[26]*Sovetskaya Rossiya* (Moscow), May 27, 1990.

[27]Irina Zorina, "The Autumn of the Patriarch: Hasn't Fidel Prepared a Splendid Funeral for His People?" Aug. 30, 1990, p. 20. (Detached from "Megapolis-Express.")

[28]Gorbachev announced the withdrawal of 11,000 servicemen, whereas only the training brigade of some 2,800 men was meant. Informed observers believe that the USSR intends to arrange the withdrawal of the training brigade and military advisers in the late 1991 negotiations. What was not clear is whether or how the Lourdes intelligence facility will be affected.

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ed to take the high road of seeming generosity and patience in its dealings with Castro. It repeatedly expressed goodwill, fidelity to the Soviet-Cuban partnership, and intentions of continued collaboration. Soviet official claims as late as early 1991 of rosy Soviet-Cuban relations does not square, however, with Soviet economic prospects, especially pessimistic forecasts of Soviet oil output. Continued Soviet purchases of sugar, nickel, and a few other Cuban products are important to both parties, and are likely to continue in the mid-term, but what really makes the Castro regime run is Soviet oil. Soviet economic relations with Cuba in the long term will be determined primarily by the extent to which the USSR finds exchanging oil for sugar and nickel profitable. Since 1960, political considerations assured this exchange; now, allowing for transition time, Cuba will have to compete with other countries.

By way of contrast, Castro has occasionally taken the low road, deprecating *perestroyka,* discrediting Soviet socialism, and insulting Gorbachev. His response to the August coup before its failure was noncommittal. Castro did not spring to Gorbachev's defense, and while he did not approve the coup explicitly, he did leave the way open for collaboration had it succeeded.

The Soviet military withdrawal from Cuba probably means that Soviet economic and military aid, so essential to the Cuban economy for 30 years, is over. Gorbachev's troop withdrawal announcement was met by agonized and embittered shrieks of protest in Havana. Gorbachev's failure to consult first with Cuba added insult to injury. Castro was especially put out that the Soviet troop withdrawal was not linked to a US withdrawal from the Guantanamo base.

In that connection, and even before Gorbachev,[29] Soviet officials were calling for the renewal of Cuban economic relations with the United States. The Soviet government knew, perhaps better than anyone else, how difficult it was to support from such distance an economy cut off from its traditional markets in this hemisphere. Since Gorbachev's ascent, Soviet leaders have been calling ever more insistently for a renewal of those traditional ties, first, as a means of getting help with their Cuban burden. More recently, such ties have been seen as a means of facilitating a regime transition that will prevent their huge political and economic expenditures in Cuba from being a total loss. Moscow still hopes to maintain good official relations with Cuba over the long term.

Bilateral issues have defined Cuban relations during the recent crises, but Castro has had grave disappointments on the multilateral scene, too. The revolution in the USSR has been accompanied by the demise of the international communist movement in Latin America as elsewhere. Castro's long-term hemispheric strategy counted on the proliferation of guerrilla operations, communist parties, revolutionary movements, radical nationalist governments, and, ultimately, socialist governments. Although he probably never thought that revolution would engulf all of Latin America in his lifetime, he had faith that enough radical regimes would emerge to serve as a severe restraint on the United States. This was to be Cuba's ultimate security guarantee if all else failed. Now, Castro has seen all these governments and almost all these movements disappear. In a figurative sense, he stands alone in the hemisphere. The question now arises whether the Castro regime can survive.[30]

Many Soviet specialists see radical changes in the Cuban economy and in the political system as inevitable though not impending.[31] They are skeptical that Castro has the political flexibility to effect reform or that his situation realistically permits it. The reformists did not seek the political demise of Castro, although, when speaking frankly, they see little alternative in the long run. Their position vis-à-vis Castro has been hardening since the coup.

Many Soviet observers doubt that Cuba, as a country with no appreciable energy resources of its own, and with only a half dozen or so marketable exports, can escape from its relentless economic dependence on foreign economies. The USSR will no longer supply substantial aid to Cuba, and prospects of economic relations with the United States are slim indeed. The Soviet authoritarian socialist model has been rejected as a failure in the USSR, and many Soviet observers I interviewed consider it a failure in Cuba, too.[32] With its economic system discredited and its foreign economic relations in ruins, the Castro regime will have great difficulty surviving.

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[29]Cole Blasier, *The Giant's Rival: The USSR and Latin America,* Pittsburgh, PA, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983, p. 128.

[30]Howard J. Wiarda discusses Cuba's crisis, mainly domestic, in "Is Cuba Next?" *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), January-April 1991, pp. 84–93.

[31]V. Borodayev and G. Leyvikina, though restrained, give a coherent account of opposition to the Castro regime and of Cuba's economic difficulties in "Cuba: The Difficult Path to Socialism," *Argumenty i Fakty* (Moscow), Mar. 17–23, 1990, p. 4.

[32]See also A. Snam, "Earning Money in the Tropics," *Komsomol'skaya Pravda,* Sept. 19, 1990.

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From Visegrád to Kraków: Cooperation, Competition, and Coexistence in Central Europe

Rudolf L. Tőkés

The new democracies of Central Europe—the Republic of Poland, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, and the Republic of Hungary—were born between June 1989, when the semi-free Polish elections were held, and May 1990, when the government of József Antall took office in Hungary. Each country faced two challenges. One was creating the institutions of a liberal democracy, market economy, and civil society. The other, more formidable challenge was ensuring the new democracy's survival, and finding and defining its new place and identity in the region, in Europe, and in the global political community.

The dual task of restoring liberty and building democracy at home and developing the ability to function as sovereign actors in the international arena has severely tested the governing skills of the new elites and the personal courage of the leaders of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Though the Soviet colonial masters have left the scene, and the Western political community has offered to help, the ultimate responsibility for keeping the infant democracies afloat at home and abroad lies with Lech Wałęsa, Václav Havel, and József Antall, together with their foreign ministers Krzysztof Skubiszewski, Jiří Dienstbier, and Géza Jeszenszky.

The August 1991 Moscow coup and the ill-timed rebuff delivered by the European Community (EC) to the efforts of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary to obtain associate membership status are sharp reminders of the extreme fragility of Poland's, Czechoslovakia's, and Hungary's security in Europe today. Yet, the coup and its uncertain aftermath helped to accelerate substantive cooperation in many fields among the three Central European states, cooperation that had formally begun at the February 15, 1991, summit of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary in Visegrád, Hungary.

The purpose of this essay is to discuss the international or, more specifically, the foreign and security policy dimensions of Poland's, Czechoslovakia's, and Hungary's record between the summit meeting of President Wałęsa, President Havel, and Prime Minister Antall in Visegrád, and the summit of these same leaders in Kraków, Poland, on October 5–6, 1991. Focusing on these three states and on this period is justified on three grounds:

- Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary were the first to gain their freedom and have gone farthest in implementing a program of political, economic, and social transformation;
- the experiences and the achievements of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary could serve as a model for Southeastern Europe, the Baltic area, and those sovereign states that are emerging from the ruins of the USSR;
- these states have done much more than just survive over the past two and one-half years. By develop-

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ing innovative and ingenious methods of self-help and regional cooperation, they found new ways to demonstrate their viability. They are now leading the way toward enhanced regional stability and the widening of European integration.

Since the G-7 summit in Paris in July 1989, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary have been perceived by the Western political community as the part of the former Soviet bloc most deserving of Western assistance. The cultural traditions of these countries, their record of anticommunist resistance, and their efforts at economic transformation are considered by the West to be highly promising for the successful transition to democracy and for "joining Europe" in a relatively short period of time. Thus, from the moment of their birth, the Central European democracies have benefited from Western attention of many kinds. In return, the West has expected these democracies to implement an agenda of political and economic integration within the Central European region. Their success or failure in implementing this agenda will be an important test of the three postcommunist states' ability to conduct themselves as competent actors in regional, European, and world affairs.

In this article, I will reconstruct and assess the security posture and present status of the Central European "Triangle" of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary through an examination of their cooperation, competition, and coexistence in the military, political, and economic spheres since early 1991 (security also has social and ecological dimensions; reference will be made to them as well in this article). Cooperation, competition, and coexistence also define the nature of the three states' interaction with respect to national and regional security, East-West relations, and regional integration.

By "national and regional security," I understand issues associated with the three states' postcommunist identity as "new democracies" of Central Europe. Matters such as the terms of these states' respective basic treaties with the USSR, the terms of their bilateral security treaties, "confidence-building" measures and efforts at conflict resolution associated with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), and bilateral consultations with NATO fall into this category.

By "East-West relations," I refer to the complex set of agreements, consultative arrangements, and negotiations between Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary on the one hand, and various multilateral agencies of the West European political community, such as the Council of Europe, the Western European Union (WEU), the *Pentagonale* Initiative (now the *Hexagonale* Group), and the EC, respectively, on the other. Bilateral negotiations between the individual states of the Triangle and individual West European states, and consultative arrangements among the former also belong to this cluster of interactions.

By "regional integration," I mean the new kind of "East-East" international politics that was initiated at the April 9, 1990, Bratislava summit of Polish, Czechoslovak, and Hungarian leaders and formally inaugurated at Visegrád. As indicated below, a broad cluster of regional initiatives on economic, legal, cultural, environmental, and "people-to-people" issues comprises this dimension of Central Europe's security agenda today.

The Central European states now find themselves, as so many times in their history, in a "no man's land" between East and West. The Warsaw Pact and the old security structures are shattered and a new all-European security structure remains to be built. Where does this leave Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary in the 1990's? An answer may be formulated in the form of six axiomatic propositions:

- In historic terms, the security posture of each state has been, at one time or another, strongly influenced, or totally dominated, by Great Powers from all directions of the compass.
- Each state's traditional perceptions of external friends and foes, have not, until very recently, coincided to provide clear-cut choices with respect to joint "natural partnerships" with individual West European powers. Polish concerns about Russia and Germany and now Ukraine; Czech apprehensions vis-à-vis Germany; Slovak ambivalence toward the Soviet Union and aspirations for independent statehood; and Hungary's sense of isolation and the psychological burden of the treaties of Trianon and Paris (and its consequent preoccupation with national minority issues) point to severe obstacles on this score.
- Apart from historic, but largely meaningless, precedents of cooperation on behalf of common objectives, the three states' main, and perhaps only, compelling motive for partnership is their shared sense of insecurity in the historic buffer zone between a friendly (but thus far noncommittal) NATO and the presently retreating (but potentially very menacing) Soviet Army.
- Although Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary have a shared foreign policy agenda, each state has comparable but, at times sharply different, national priorities that cannot be accommodated by increased coordination among the domestic policies of the three states. This is particularly true for national scenarios of institutional transformation, marketization, privatiza-

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tion, and policies toward ethnic minorities at home and abroad.

- In addition to security anxieties resulting from the internal collapse of the USSR (civil war, migration, breakdown of trade relations, etc.), a new north-south political cleavage between Central Europe and Southeastern Europe (Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania) is emerging that could impinge, directly and indirectly, on the security postures of all three states.
- The transitional nature of the three states' external environment will be exacerbated by the effect on Central Europe of agreements between Washington and Moscow and between individual West European states and Moscow concerning "spheres" of interest and the recognition of "legitimate security needs" in the Eurasian continent and elsewhere in the world.

With these propositions in mind, I now turn to the many dimensions of "cooperation, competition, and coexistence" among the three new democracies of Central Europe.

The Emergence of the Triangle

The trilateral relationship among Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, though in existence for seven months, is still an unexamined proposition for Central European politicians and intellectuals alike. The idea of the Triangle rests on an odd mixture of historic myths and realities, wishful thinking and hard-headed pragmatism, and historically evolved patterns of mutual empathy and distrust among the leaders and the peoples of the three states. The idea that "once upon a time there were the great kings Casimir, John, and Charles Robert" from Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary who met in 1335 to lay the foundations for their peoples' future cooperation is compelling and dangerous at the same time. This notion is compelling because it helps legitimate the relationship by calling attention to a record of shared triumphs—of which there were few—and shared adversities—of which there were many. But it is also dangerous because it unwittingly introduces an element of wishful thinking that obfuscates the pronounced differences among the respective national interests of the three states—both in 1335 and in 1991.

The idea of a "community of fate of small Central European nations" has been a persistent theme in the thinking of democratic thinkers in the region from Tomàš Masaryk and Oscar Jászi to Milan Kundera, György Konrád, and other advocates of a civil society in this part of Europe. With respect to the more immediate antecedents of trilateral thinking, one must call attention to the Helsinki Final Act, the activists of the Charter '77 movement, the Hungarian authors of the István Bibó *Festschrift* of 1980,[1] and the Polish Solidarity thinkers' contributions to this common intellectual posture. This posture, to the extent that it is accepted by the relevant players in the trilateral process, may be seen as a foreign policy mandate for the new democracies of Central Europe.

More fundamentally, what is at issue here is whether the record of informal interaction between Czech and Polish dissidents,[2] clandestine consultations among Polish, Hungarian, and Czech dissidents in the early 1980's in Western Europe and elsewhere, the famous October 1986 "30th Anniversary" joint appeal,[3] and the written evidence of regional solidarity on the part of Polish, Czech, and Hungarian dissident intellectuals should be seen as binding precedents for today's policy-makers in Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest. It is one thing to cherish the memory of regional solidarity in face of the severe police harassment these dissidents experienced under the old regimes, and it is quite another to translate the dreams and hopes of yesterday's dissidents, by means of unglamorous daily bureaucratic foreign policy activity, into multilateral treaties and cooperative agreements among sovereign states.

The situation is further exacerbated by the sullen opposition to new initiatives by senior holdover foreign policy bureaucrats who are still in charge of many departments in the foreign, defense, and foreign trade ministries in Warsaw, Prague, Bratislava, and Budapest. There may be no clear evidence of outright sabotage of government directives by the old cadres, but there is ample evidence that many who were trained to conduct their states' foreign affairs in subservience to Moscow's demands are, at best, skeptical about reform measures. At worst, they are self-appointed protectors of their late masters' interest in stemming the emergence of potentially anti-Soviet alliances, such as the trilateral partnership among Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. In other words, although there is a tremendous amount of residual goodwill and openness to new ideas among the new political elites of Warsaw,

[1] *Bibó emlékkönyv* (The Bibó Memorial Book), Budapest, *samizdat*, 1980. This *Festschrift* contains contributions by 75 leading Hungarian dissident intellectuals in honor of István Bibó—a brilliant liberal democratic political philosopher, a member of Imre Nagy's government in October 1956, and a victim of lengthy imprisonment and subsequent official harassment by the Kádár regime.

[2] In the early 1980's, Polish Solidarity activists and members of Czechoslovakia's Charter '77 met clandestinely on the Czechoslovak side of the border to "exchange experiences" and ideas.

[3] The "30th Anniversary" appeal was prompted by a commemoration of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and was the first such document that Polish, Czechoslovak, Hungarian, and Soviet dissidents signed together.

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Prague, Bratislava, and Budapest, there is an urgent need to identify, confront, and, if possible, overcome old and new constraints that impede the further evolution of the three states' cooperative intentions.

The Visegrád summit of February 15, 1991, yielded two policy documents designed to inform and guide the actions of those responsible in Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest for the maintenance and future development of the trilateral relationship. The "Solemn Declaration" is a statement of philosophical preferences. The "Declaration on the Cooperation of the Republic of Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, and the Republic of Poland on the Road to European Integration" is a statement of political intentions, as well as an agenda for policy implementation.[4] To understand what they are and what they are not, the Visegrád documents must be seen in a broader perspective of the three states' transitions from dictatorship to democracy.

The Hungarian transition was quite long in duration (in fact, one might argue that it had been in progress since the inauguration of the New Economic Mechanism in 1968). Through the instrumentality of the National Round Table of the summer of 1989, it was a "negotiated," and therefore peaceful, transition. Indeed, in foreign policy terms, the freely elected Hungarian government that took office in May 1990 had no difficulty in using working papers and planning documents that the lame duck communist government, particularly foreign minister Gyula Horn, had prepared for the Bratislava summit of April 9, 1990.

The Polish transition was similarly protracted and "negotiated" to some extent, but, overall, the process has been stormy indeed. The milestones were the Round Table negotiations of early 1989, the elections of June 1989, the government reshuffling in the summer of 1990, the presidential elections of late 1990, and the October 27, 1991, parliamentary elections, which completed the process of transition from one kind of political system to another. In any case, the policies and the personnel of the Polish foreign ministry of June 1990 are definitely not the same as those of today.

The Czechoslovak transition, initiated by the so-called "velvet revolution," is not over. Divisive and potentially crippling debates concerning such core issues as the legitimacy of federal structures, jurisdiction over domestic and foreign policies, and public support for the new regimes in Prague and Bratislava counsel caution with respect to the capability of the federal leadership to deliver on its domestic and foreign policy commitments.

Thus, the "Visegrád alliance" of February 1991 can best be seen as a caucus of like-minded Central European reform elites with somewhat tenuous control over the political, economic, and security resources of their respective states rather than a "real" summit meeting of fully empowered national leaders of unquestionably stable political systems. The actual record of the foreign policy interactions of these states before the Visegrád summit lends credence to this assessment.

Paternity of the present trilateral relationship is claimed by all partners. However, it seems that that the combination of a Polish proposal of June 1989 and a Czechoslovak memorandum of February 1990 laid the original conceptual groundwork for the Visegrád declaration. The immediate objective of the Czechoslovak memorandum was not to inaugurate a trilateral relationship but to secure the entry of Czechoslovakia into an Italian-Yugoslav-Austrian-Hungarian "Alps-Adria" political consultative group that with Czechoslovakia's entry became the *Pentagonale* at the April 9, 1990, Bratislava meeting of the foreign ministers of Italy, Yugoslavia, Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia.

Judging by press accounts and the recollections of participants, the meeting of foreign ministers in Bratislava was a hastily improvised affair.[5] The host country did not have much of an agenda, the Italian and the Austrian spokesmen did not have much to say, and the "born-again democrat," then Hungarian foreign minister Gyula Horn, said even less, which was understandable given the crushing electoral defeat of his Hungarian Socialist Party (formerly the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party) in the final round of the Hungarian elections on the preceding day. Indeed, the Bratislava meeting will go down in history as an inept but earnest attempt to articulate the participating states' security needs in the volatile international environment of spring 1990.

It was not the Bratislava summit but the June 7, 1990, Warsaw Pact summit in Moscow that gave birth to what became the working trilateral relationship of today. The Moscow summit was critically important for two rea-

[4]"Solemn Declaration," Press Release No. 6/1991, Feb. 15, 1991, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Republic of Hungary; "Declaration on the Cooperation of the Republic of Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, and the Republic of Poland on the Road to European Integration," Press Release No. 4/1991, Feb. 15, 1991, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Republic of Hungary.

[5]See *Magyar Hírlap* (Budapest) Apr. 11, 1990; *Polityka* (Warsaw), Apr. 14, 1990; *Lidové Noviny* (Prague) Apr. 10, 1990; and the summary of Polish and Czechoslovak comments on the Bratislava summit in *Népszabadság* (Budapest), Apr. 11, 1990. In any case, as late as July 1990, the affected parties could not come up with a commonly agreed-upon text of the closing communiqué for the April 9 meeting. On the *Pentagonale*, see Hans-Peter Neuhold, "Renaissance of Regionalism," *Der Standard Album Supplement* (Vienna), Jan. 4, 1991, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Western Europe* (Washington, DC—hereafter *FBIS-WEU*), Feb. 26, 1991, pp. 2–3.

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Hungarian President Árpád Göncz, center, arrives in Moscow on June 6, 1990, to attend a meeting of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee. He is welcomed by Aleksandr Yakovlev (right).

—V. Kuzmin/TASS from Sovfoto.

sons.[6] First, thanks to Prime Minister Antall's courageous decision to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, Poles and Czechoslovaks had the opportunity to experience firsthand what political will can accomplish in face of expected Soviet opposition.[7] Second, work in the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee between June and November 1990 brought the three states together in a negotiating environment that enabled them to clarify the commonalities in their security needs and juxtapose these needs to those of Moscow.

The position of the three states on the accelerated dismantling of the Warsaw Pact became even bolder soon after the October 17, 1990, Polish-Czechoslovak-Hungarian deputy foreign ministerial consultations in Warsaw after which some of the negotiators in the Political Consultative Committee were replaced, giving fresh impetus to the work of the group and transforming it from a debating club of holdover security policy *apparatchiki* into a burial party of the Warsaw Pact.

The emergence of the US-led Gulf alliance, the Paris CSCE summit in November 1990, and the subsequent destabilization of the "Moscow center" were necessary, though far from sufficient, conditions for the growing cohesion of the three Central European states' positions on regional cooperation. But other events could be pointed to as more decisive in firming up the trilateralist position of the three states: Eduard Shevardnadze's resignation as USSR foreign minister in December 1990, the decision of the three states to commit personnel in support of the US-led Gulf alliance, Moscow's ruthless repression of the Baltic states' aspirations to independence, and the sense that Mikhail Gorbachev had become a puppet of the Soviet army and the KGB. The result was that a firm "trilateralist" policy posture began to emerge in early 1991.[8]

The Visegrád summit was mainly a symbolic event, but its agenda and closing declaration are useful in identifying, for analytical purposes, the dimensions and the overall boundaries of the trilateral relationship of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. As indicated above, the dimensions are in the realms of security, East-West integration, and regional integration.[9]

The Security Dimension

A state's most basic interest is survival; "security" is a central objective as well as the mechanism through which this interest is pursued. In an interdependent world, the security needs of a non-nuclear state that is militarily indefensible, economically vulnerable, and politically unstable, as well as caught in a politico-military transition from one alliance system to another, are difficult to define. This generalization applies to each of the Central European partners. However, if one were to consider each of the three states' security needs and problems both individually and as a unit, one would quickly reach an analytical impasse by virtue of the

[6]"Warsaw Pact Under Fire," *The New York Times*, June 7, 1990; Alfred Reisch, "Hungary to Leave the Military Arm of the Warsaw Pact," Radio Free Europe, *Report on Eastern Europe* (Munich), June 29, 1990, p. 29; and the interview with József Antall, *Első Kézből* (Budapest), June 12, 1990.

[7]Antall also stated at the meeting that he considered NATO and the US presence in Europe to be "stabilizing factors." See the interview with State Secretary of Foreign Affairs Ferenc Somogyi in *Magyar Hírlap*, Aug. 31, 1991.

[8]As far as one can tell, the decision to firm up the agenda for the Visegrád summit was made at the January 21 meeting of the three foreign ministers in Budapest. See "Hungarian, Polish, CSFR Foreign Ministers Meet," Budapest Domestic Service, Jan. 21, 1991, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: East Europe* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-EEU*), Jan. 25, 1991, p. 1.

[9]For recent Western commentaries on Central European security issues, see Christopher Smart, "The Emerging Security Structures of East Europe: Girding for Europe's Next Wars," HI-4126-RR, Indianapolis, IN, Hudson Institute, September 1990; Ronald D. Asmus, et al., *Soviet Foreign Policy and the Revolutions of 1989 in Eastern Europe*, R-3909-USDP, Santa Monica, CA, The RAND Corporation, 1991; Andrew A. Michta, "East-Central Europe in Search of Security," *SAIS Review* (Washington, DC), Winter/Spring 1991, pp. 59–71; and Joshua B. Spero, "Central European Security After Visegrád," unpublished manuscript, June 9, 1991.

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Hungarian Prime Minister József Antall, Polish President Lech Wałęsa, and Czech and Slovak Federal Republic President Václav Havel at the Visegrád summit, February 15, 1991.

—Barnabás Honéczny/MTI-FOTÓ.

sheer number of unforeseeable policy contingencies that the interactions of the three with one another and of the three with their external environment would yield. For a partial understanding of the matrix of these numerous factors, I will, therefore, briefly consider the three states' shared domestic priorities, and then discuss the principal security dilemmas of the Triangle alliance in 1991.

As stated in the preamble of the Visegrád declaration, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary are concurrently engaged in the tasks of deconstruction; reconstruction; and construction of their political, economic, and social order. On the national level, they are dismantling the structures of the old political system, rebuilding their economies, and promoting an independent stance in international affairs. The simultaneous implementation of deconstruction, reconstruction, and construction would, in the best of circumstances, be a prescription for *instability*—something incompatible with any state's security needs. And when this triple task is undertaken during a period of transition between two security systems, the threat to a given state's security needs is compounded.

Deconstruction, reconstruction, and construction are not proceeding everywhere in Central Europe with the same vigor. An important flaw in the common security posture of the Visegrád alliance is the ambivalent stance of the Slovak leadership vis-à-vis the "pre-coup" USSR. Slovakia remains a barely "reformed" part of the Czech and Slovak federal state, with many of the old regime's cadres, resources, and xenophobic ideologies intact. Anyone who witnessed, as I did in March 1991, the candlelight vigil in Bratislava of young Slovak nationalists demanding the expulsion of Jews and Hungarians from the parliament and celebrating the anniversary of the establishment of Father Jozef Tiso's fascist republic has reason to be concerned about the reliability of the "fourth nation" of the trilateral alliance.

In early 1991, Central Europe's foremost security dilemma was the continued existence of the Warsaw Pact. The Hungarian initiative for unilateral withdrawal from the Pact became a unified trilateral stance by February 1991.[10] For reasons that are still unclear, three days before the Visegrád summit, Gorbachev consented to the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact as a military organization. It was to be done by March 31, 1991—a date well ahead of the original Hungarian deadline of December 31, 1991.

[10](Fn. 10 follows on p. 106.)

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However, a new problem arose even before the formal dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. Between February and late April 1991, Soviet Communist party ideologues, conservative foreign policy analysts, the resident Soviet ambassadors in Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest, and deputy foreign minister Yuliy Kvitsinskiy tried to get the postcommunist governments of the region to sign away their sovereignty and accede to the ratification of a basic treaty with the Soviet Union stipulating that the East European states were to refrain from joining an alliance directed against the USSR. Of course, Moscow had NATO in mind, but the treaties might have proscribed Central European membership in the EC as well.[11] In the end, Romania was the only state that acceded to this Soviet demand and agreed not to join any international organizations that Moscow deemed to be inimical to its security interests.[12]

Emboldened by Moscow's evident inability to apply credible military pressure on Eastern Europe and by the prompt and positive outcome of the Gulf war, Budapest, Prague, Warsaw, and Sofia chose to reject the Soviet demands. In the post-coup period, each of these countries can now expect to sign basic treaties with Moscow that will not contain this security clause. (After the August coup, even the Romanian regime found the courage to request renegotiation of the security clause in the Soviet-Romanian basic treaty.)[13]

The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia and Hungary also coincided with the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact's Political Consultative Committee in early July.[14] With the Soviet troops out of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, Poland is the only Central European state that remains exposed to direct Soviet military pressure. However, all Central European states remain vulnerable to indirect Soviet military pressures. In the absence of an integrated regional network to defend the air space over Central Europe, there is nothing to prevent Soviet overflights of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. In any case, as long as Soviet troops are stationed on Polish soil, Poland's direct NATO links might be impaired and thus may not develop together with those of Hungary and Czechoslovakia.[15]

Somewhat less assertively, the Triangle also played a major role in relegating the Council for Economic Mutual Assistance (CEMA) to the dustbin of Soviet-bloc history.[16] Western economists might dispute the following proposition, but, as seen from Central Europe, CEMA contributed little to the economic security and

[10]The announcement was made in letters that were handed over to the heads of the Warsaw Pact states on February 11, 1991. It was a surprise to all concerned, including the editors of *Pravda*. As they put it, "The whole world press is discussing the news. Our allies, judging by the responses received by the editorial office, support the ideas proposed in M. S. Gorbachev's message to the leaders of Czechoslovakia and other countries. Regrettably, we have only learned about the top Soviet leadership's plans and proposals regarding the Warsaw Pact's future from foreign sources. And, unfortunately, this is not the first time that this kind of thing has happened. Is it permitted to ask how long the press and, consequently, readers are going to learn about such events from 'secondary' sources?" *Pravda* (Moscow), Feb. 18, 1991, trans. in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-SOV*), Feb. 22, 1991, p. 7.

[11]The commentary of Soviet foreign ministry spokesman Vitaliy Churkin well summarizes the Soviet position on this issue: ". . . the attempts of certain circles to depict the matter in such a way that the USSR is supposedly striving to fix in new treaties one-sided advantages and to hurt the sovereignty of its partners does not bear out criticism. Everything being proposed by the Soviet side is based on equal rights and full reciprocity, and corresponds with the UN Charter and documents in the Helsinki process." TASS International Service, May 6, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, May 7, 1991, p. 1.

See also V. Markushin, "From Love to Hatred? What Is Troubling About the Positions of Some East European Neighbors," *Krasnaya Zvezda* (Moscow), Feb. 5, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 14, 1991, pp. 71–72; "Old Friend—New Enemy?" *Pravda*, Feb. 11, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Feb. 13, 1991, pp. 17–18, Mikhail Aleksandrov, "Security of the USSR: Two Views of the Philosophy of Foreign Policy," *Literaturnaya Rossiya* (Moscow), Feb. 22, 1991 trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, May 3, 1991, pp. 5–10; Valeriy Musatov, "East Europe: 'Typhoon of Change'," *Pravda*, Mar. 13, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Mar. 14, 1991, pp. 3–6; "Eastern Europe: What Comes After the Changes. Interview with Yu. A. Kvitsinskiy, USSR Deputy Foreign Minister," *Pravda*, Mar. 18, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Mar. 21, 1991, pp. 16–18; "USSR Foreign Ministry Spokesman's Statement," *Izvestiya* (Moscow), Mar. 30, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Apr. 4, 1991; A. Kaznacheyev, "Hopes and Illusions," *Sovetskaya Rossiya* (Moscow), Apr. 17, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Apr. 25, 1991, pp. 10–12; "Interview with Vadim Zagladin," Moscow World Service, Mar. 23, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Mar. 27, 1991, p. 3, Jiří Roskot, "The Future of European Security. Interview with Yuliy Kvitsinskiy," *Rudé Právo* (Prague), Apr. 27, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, May 3, 1991, pp. 10–11; "Neither Success nor Failure—Interview on the Outcome on the Hungarian-Soviet Basic Treaty Negotiations with Yuliy Kvitsinskiy," *Népszabadság*, Apr. 29, 1991; and "Excerpts from a CPSU Central Committee Memorandum," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (Frankfurt/Main), June 7, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, June 25, 1991, pp. 19–20.

[12]"Romania is the first country to have proved ready for the formulation in a treaty of its new relations with the Soviet Union, relations that have become truly equal." TASS International Service, Apr. 5, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Apr. 8, 1991, p. 22.

[13]The issue was formally raised by Romanian foreign minister Adrian Nastase in a meeting with Soviet foreign minister Boris Pankin at the Moscow CSCE Conference on Human Rights in September 1991. See "Talks to Romania's Nastase," ROMPRES (Bucharest), Sept. 12, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 16, 1991, p. 4. See also "Foreign Ministry's Chebeleu on USSR Treaty, Visits," ROMPRES, Oct. 23, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Oct. 24, 1991, p. 24.

[14]On this, see "Yanayev's Address at Political Consultative Committee Conference in Prague Transmitted to *Izvestiya* at Delegation's Request," TASS International Service, July 1, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, July 3, 1991, pp. 1–3. For the text of the "Protocol Ending the Validity of the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance Signed in Warsaw, May 14, 1955, and of the Protocol Extending Its Validity Signed in Warsaw, April 16, 1985," see *Izvestiya*, July 3, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, July 8, 1991, pp. 3–4.

[15]On Poland's unique security dilemmas, see L. Pochivalov, "Warsaw. Belweder. An Hour with President Wałęsa," *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Moscow), May 1, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, May 9, 1991, pp, 12–15; Przemysław Grudziński, "The Polish Conception of National Security After the Cold War," presented at a conference on "The Formulation of New Security Policies for Eastern Europe," Budapest, June 14–15, 1991; and Oskar A. Chomicki, Ed., "Poland in Europe," Warsaw, Polish Senate Center for International Studies, 1991.

[16]On the final unraveling of the CEMA, see the TASS report by George Mikhailin, Feb. 27, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Mar. 1, 1991, p. 3.

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long-term economic viability of its member-states. On the other hand, the USSR was and still is a pervasive economic force in Eastern Europe. As the region's principal supplier of oil and natural gas, and as a major market for East European agricultural commodities and the goods produced by Central Europe's heavy industries, Moscow continues to hold most of the trump cards when it comes to energy and industrial employment in this part of the world. These are more than sufficient reasons for apprehension in Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest.

In the spring of 1991, some conservative Soviet foreign policy strategists publicly advocated the use of energy supplies and the manipulation of exports from Eastern Europe to exercise leverage over the foreign policies of the East European states.[17] Indeed, in view of Russian republic Prime Minister Ivan Silayev's post-coup ruminations about a developing a "common economic sphere" with the former CEMA states, there is nothing even now that prevents Moscow from tightening the energy and trade screws to obtain financial and trade concessions from Eastern Europe.[18]

Since the August coup, relations between Moscow and the Central European states have been in flux. On the one hand, Central Europe has been dealing with a very different Soviet Union. Foreign minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh and deputy foreign minister Kvitsinskiy, the architect and the executor of policies designed to preserve Moscow's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, are out of power.[19] On the other hand, no one knows what the "new" Gorbachev and Boris Yel'tsin have in mind for Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary.

From the perspective of Central Europe, another security dilemma is whether to do business on security, energy, and trade matters with Moscow, with the Russian republic, or with Kiev, Minsk, Kishinev, and the Central Asian republics.[20] Although the latter may be more attractive trade partners inasmuch as they do not seek to exercise political leverage over Central Europe, they do not have the hard currency to pay for Polish, Czechoslovak, and Hungarian exports.

The new Union treaty will, or should, sort out the spheres of competence between Moscow and the republics. However, none of this is likely to assuage Central Europe's security concerns, which are prompted by fear of chaos and instability in the East. Another coup attempt, nuclear accidents, and large-scale emigration from republics torn by civil war cannot be excluded. But, as always, the Soviet Army remains the ultimate threat to Central Europe.

For the Triangle, the answers to these security dilemmas are to be found in NATO and the security shield it could extend to protect Central Europe from the spillover effects of a collapsing USSR (and from the effects of the Yugoslav civil war). The evolution of relations between the new democracies and NATO has been a complex process. It began with the July 1990 NATO summit in London, where the alliance's leaders invited the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe to establish regular diplomatic liaison with it.[21] The process was taken a step further at the November 1990 CSCE summit in Paris with the adoption of a "Joint Declaration" between NATO and the Warsaw Pact that included provisions for visits and intensified consultations between NATO and its former adversaries.[22]

This process of East-West rapprochement, although seemingly straightforward, was, in reality, anything but that. The NATO–Warsaw Pact dialogues made sense as long as there was an eastern military alliance that

[17]"On the Development of Conditions in Eastern Europe and Our Policy in This Region. Resolution of the Secretariat of the CPSU Central Committee, January 22, 1991," *Izvestiya TsK KPSS* (Moscow), No. 3, 1991, pp. 12–17.

[18]This is what Silayev said at the September 3, 1991, extraordinary session of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies: "Yesterday, among other things, our committee received the author of the economic reforms in Poland, Mr. Balcerowicz, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers. He listened to what we had to say with great interest and showed very great interest in a future union and the possible participation of that country in particular. For this reason, we should [the next word 'not' is not in the English translation of this speech] rule out in advance the possibility of Bulgaria, Poland, and Czechoslovakia joining our economic community." Moscow Central Television First Program, Sept. 3, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 4, 1991, p. 13. When asked for a comment, Balcerowicz chose to understand Silayev's point as an invitation for "good relations" with the USSR—an idea that he, too, supported. Radio Warszawa Network, Sept. 3, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 4, 1991, p. 19. The Hungarian reaction, however, was considerably less diplomatic. "Hungary will not conclude any agreement that will distance it from West European integration. This was the reaction in the foreign ministry to the statement by Ivan Silayev, acting Soviet head of government, that the former socialist countries could also join the economic agreement to be concluded by the Soviet Union's member-republics." Kossuth Radio Network (Budapest), Sept. 4, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 5, 1991, p. 15. At a hastily convened news conference, Silayev subsequently retracted his statement.

[19]As Aleksandr Lebedev, the new Soviet ambassador to Czechoslovakia and previously Ambassador (now foreign minister) Boris Pankin's deputy at the Prague embassy, recalls: "Now these people have gone—but not all of them; for instance, Yuliy Kvitsinskiy, who is first deputy minister at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at least for the time being, led these [i.e. the basic treaty] talks to a considerable degree and was not helpful at all in looking for compromise. Rather the contrary, he created problems. This is my personal assessment of his stance, but I would say he behaved as dealing from the position of a superpower, using an imperial and arrogant tone and he did not try to find compromise as far as the content is concerned. All this should change now." Prague television interview with Aleksandr Lebedev, Aug. 29, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 30, 1991, p. 11.

[20]From the viewpoint of many Central European diplomats, the rush of the three states to quickly sign a reworded basic treaty with the USSR tends to legitimate and strengthen Gorbachev's position vis-à-vis the republics, which are seen as the future *primary* trading partners of the three states.

[21]For the text of the London Declaration, see *NATO Review* (Brussels), No. 4, August 1990, p. 32.

[22]On this, see Manfred Woerner, "The Atlantic Alliance in the New Era," ibid., No. 1, February 1991, pp. 3–10.

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Polish President Lech Wałęsa and NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner meet at NATO's Brussels headquarters in July 1991.

—Reuters/Bettmann.

could speak authoritatively about common goals and objectives. After the demise of the Warsaw Pact, the "Helsinki process" and its institutional embodiment, the CSCE, became the ground on which NATO-members were able to interact with the former member-states of the Pact.[23]

Under such circumstances, those responsible for Central Europe's security policies were confronted with the unenviable task of having to define their states' security needs in the face of contradictory messages from Brussels, Washington, Bonn, London, Paris, and Moscow. On the one hand, it was understood by all that NATO was not ready to admit any new members. On the other hand, the gates were wide open for various forms of linkage and liaison between the states of Central Europe and NATO.

On March 21, 1991, Václav Havel gave an official address before the NATO council in Brussels.[24] Speaking for Czechoslovakia, as well as for its trilateral partners, Havel agreed that the key elements of the new European architecture were the CSCE, the Council of Europe, NATO, the EC, and the WEU. However, he warned that "our countries are dangerously sliding into a certain political, economic, and security vacuum." His concluding point—"what the people in the East have valid reasons to fear, the West should fear as well"—may prove prophetic. Since then, with varying degrees of urgency and differing emphasis, Havel's arguments have been echoed by Polish Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki, Czechoslovak foreign minister Jiři Dienstbier, Hungarian foreign minister Géza Jeszenszky, and other Central European foreign policy officials.[25]

The Western response to such arguments was remarkably prompt and positive. NATO's first "post–Warsaw Pact" position was submitted by Secretary

[23]However, the CSCE, at least until November 1990, lacked a permanent administrative infrastructure. The establishment of a CSCE Secretariat in Vienna, a Conflict Prevention Center in Prague, and an Office of Free Elections in Warsaw institutionalized the CSCE and established its presence in Central Europe, precisely the region where it was needed the most. "European Multinational Organizations: A Primer," Radio Free Europe, *Report on Eastern Europe* (Munich), Aug. 9, 1991, pp. 25–29.

[24]Text in *NATO Review*, No. 2, April 1991, pp. 31–35.

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General Manfred Woerner at the Prague Conference on the Future of European Security on April 25, 1991.[26] He stressed the need to define "a new modern and comprehensive concept of security," and spoke of the "societal, economic, and mental underpinnings" without which security could become a hollow concept. As Woerner put it, "because of its geostrategic location, its sheer size, its military might, and its world power aspirations," the USSR continues to play a major role in shaping security outcomes in Europe. In view of this fact, Eastern Europe should be neither "neutral, nor . . . a buffer zone" and, as a substitute for formal security guarantees, "of which non-members do not partake," he offered a "multiple and intensive web of relations that do not exclude the Soviet Union." All this put the burden of ensuring national and Central European security where it had been in the first place—on the shoulders of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary.

As Woerner suggested (and Havel and others agree), the Triangle's security needs might be met to a certain extent through bilateral intra-regional security treaties and participation in the CSCE; membership in organizations such as the *Hexagonale* Group and the Council of Europe; and associate membership status in the EC, WEU, and the like. However, these are but "trip wires" rather than the "real thing."

The real thing is participation in a NATO that secures the continued presence of US troops in Europe. The Baker-Genscher statement of May 10, 1991, goes a long way to address this issue.[27] In it, Central European policy-makers found references to "NATO as the principal venue," "NATO as guarantor of stability," and, even more important, "NATO as agent of change." The assignment of an activist role to NATO as a direct facilitator of European integration and a guardian of the new postcommunist status quo was, from the new democracies' viewpoint, a major step in the right direction.

The North Atlantic Council Statement of June 7, 1991—"Partnership with the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe"—also came very close, but not close enough, to what the peoples and the leaders of Central Europe wanted to hear.[28] The statement declared: "Our security is inseparably linked to that of all states in Europe," and added that ". . . our security can best be safeguarded through the further development of a network of interlocking institutions and relationships, constituting a comprehensive architecture in which the Alliance, the process of integration, and the CSCE are the key elements."

An option, albeit less advantageous than joining NATO, is for each of the Triangle countries to develop a network of bilateral treaties with major European powers. Yet another, admittedly ancillary, option for bolstering Central Europe's security could be the development of relationships between the Triangle countries and those states of the Western community that might have an interest in privileged access to them or want a direct voice in ensuring certain politico-economic policies in Central Europe. Germany, Italy, or the Benelux states might be the most likely candidates in this regard. Finally, recent efforts by the trilateral states to establish treaty links with the Russian republic, Ukraine, the Baltic states, and Belorussia are ingenious, and perhaps even elegant, forms of rearguard action to attenuate the impact of the *only* remaining military threat to the security of Central Europe, that is, the threat presented by Gorbachev's Soviet Union.

However, despite these measures, as they see it in Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest, at the end of the day of conferences, consultations, declarations, banquet speeches, and photo opportunities with world leaders, NATO is still the only credible deterrent to the Soviet Army and the next group of putsch-makers behind it.

The East-West Dimension

Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary are, and have been for the last 1,000 years, European states. Their European identity imparts certain advantages to the Triangle in its collective and individual dealings with the rest of the (West) European community. Some of these advantages, as will be shown below, are derived from historic traditions, while others are the result of events of the last 35 years. The years 1956, 1968, and 1980–81 are not only road-markers but powerful symbols of the commitment of these three Central European peoples to the core values of European civilization. The thus-far peaceful and successful transitions from dictatorship to democracy that have taken place in these three

[25]"About Polish Security. Interview with Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki," *Polska Zbrojna* (Warsaw), Aug. 30–Sept. 1, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 4, 1991, pp. 19–21; "Ten Principles Regarding the Future of Europe as Agreed in Prague by Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs of the CSFR Jiří Dienstbier and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the FRG Hans-Dietrich Genscher," Prague, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Apr. 11, 1991; and Géza Jeszenszky, "Security in the New Central Europe," address delivered at the Bologna Center, The Johns Hopkins University, May 17, 1991, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Hungary, *Current Policy* (Budapest), No. 23, 1991.

[26]*FBIS-EEU*, Apr. 29, 1991, pp. 1–2.

[27]"Statement by Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, May 10, 1991," US Department of State, Office of the Assistant Secretary/Spokesman, May 10, 1991.

[28]Text in *NATO Review*, No. 3, June 1991, pp. 28–29.

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states also have served as evidence of Central Europe's willingness and ability to live up to European norms and expectations. For these reasons, the three states are natural partners of the rest of the (West) European community.

Western recognition of the Central European commitment to European norms has taken many forms over the years. As indicated above, the most relevant has been the Western tendency, since the July 1989 meeting of the G-7 in Paris, to view the three states as a unit —one that is "destined to succeed." US consent to the participation of these three states in the Gulf alliance (and the rejection of others from Eastern Europe) is the most recent piece of evidence that Central Europe occupies a distinct position in the strategic thinking of the Western alliance. The Baker-Genscher statement, which used the formulation "Central and Eastern Europe," also suggests that distinctions are being drawn between Central Europe and other postcommunist states of Eastern Europe.

But when thinking about the possible configurations of relations between Western and Central Europe, one must be mindful of certain facts in the relations between sovereign states:

- all state actors are inherently unequal to one another with respect to size, geographic location, population, economic development, military capabilities, and other attributes of national power;
- Poland and Czechoslovakia, for historical, geostrategic, and economic reasons, seem to have greater access to, and possibly influence over, their potential Western partners than does Hungary;
- there is a built-in competitive relationship for access to and influence over Western partners among the three states of Central Europe;
- because the national interests of the three states are not identical, the principal challenge to the Triangle countries is to transform their relationship from a competitive to a cooperative one.

The advantages that may be gained through unilateral actions with the West vastly outnumber the advantages that may be gained through triangular cooperation. Therefore, if the trilateral alliance is to survive, the member-states must make strenuous efforts to act as a unit for the joint promotion of their shared interests.

Although there are numerous institutions that provide the opportunity to promote these shared interests—the UN and its functional agencies, NATO, the CSCE, the Council of Europe, the WEU, and the innumerable working groups, task forces, and committees spawned by these organizations—they constitute an institutional environment of awesome complexity. This environment is also an obstacle to the coordinated articulation of shared interests.

The Visegrád declaration offers brave and hopeful language about the simultaneous enhancement of national identity (read: interests) and the pursuit of shared objectives. However, in political terms, any Polish, Czechoslovak, or Hungarian government that succeeds in "being the first to join the European Community" will enhance its popular approval and greatly strengthen its chances for re-election. Therefore, to improve their chances in the race to "join Europe," the three states have each engaged in frenzied efforts to build such wording into their bilateral treaties with Western partners that would somehow commit the latter to support Poland's, Czechoslovakia's, or Hungary's wishes to come closer to, and/or eventually become a full member of, the EC and NATO. Moreover, until recently, one might have surmised that Poland's, Czechoslovakia's, or Hungary's negotiations with the EC were not coordinated as to language and operative details. But following France's September 1991 veto of EC associate membership for the Triangle, all three states are wiser for the experience. On the eve of President Wałęsa's official visit to Czechoslovakia, a Czech journalist asked him:

When leading Western politicians speak directly and forget about being polite, it seems that Poland, the CSFR, and Hungary are regarded—from an economic view as European Community partners and rivals —as second- or third-class countries. That is, in the opinion of these politicians, it would be more purposeful if the troika attempted some kind of second-league integration and tried to find out what they can do and only then—figuratively speaking—run out onto the first league European integration sports field. What is your view?

Wałęsa answered:

Each of us very much desires to link up with Western Europe. A really serious question arises here: Should each of us try to catch up with the more developed part of Europe on his own or should we strive to make the most rational use possible of the comparable potential of comparable economies for better cooperation among the CSFR, Poland, and Hungary, and then, on this basis, attempt a more effective approach toward an integrated Western Europe? On more than one occasion, experience has taught us the extent to which we are mutually dependent on each other. I think we can simultaneously continue in

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the reforms and transformations oriented toward where the West now is and, at the same time, utilize our existing possibilities. . . . This would be perhaps perceived in the way you mentioned in your question: Training hard in the second league and then breaking through to meet the very best competition.[29]

Wałęsa is absolutely right. But the blunt truth about human nature and national interests is that each Triangle member has a certain incentive to try to reach Europe on its own rather than cooperate with its partners.

The Regional Dimension

Regional integration as a means to overcome traditional national rivalries among neighbors has been a basic ideological building block in the architecture of postwar European unity. A "Europe of regions" is to ensure the stability of a "Europe without borders." The principles of a "Europe of regions" and a "Europe without borders" have been embraced by the Triangle countries, especially Hungary, which seeks to preserve and strengthen ties with the 3 million ethnic Hungarians living in Slovakia, Romania, and Vojvodina.

Regional integration allows the Triangle to acquire habits of cooperation and to become well versed in the use of mechanisms for resolving conflicts through negotiations. The Visegrád declaration tries to make a case that Central Europe's regional integration provides the experience necessary for the entry of the three states into an already integrated EC. Participants of the Visegrád summit agreed to consult and actively cooperate with one another in the following areas:

- developing security policies and relations with all-European institutions;
- developing contacts among citizens, governmental institutions, and religious and social organizations;
- promoting free movement of capital and labor, market-based (and private-sector) cooperation, and foreign investment;
- developing a regional transportation infrastructure, and energy and telecommunications systems;
- cooperating in the ecological sphere;
- promoting cultural exchanges and information flows;
- protecting human rights, particularly those of ethnic minorities;
- developing contacts between local governments and sub-regions.[30]

Between the Visegrád summit and the Moscow coup, the Triangle held numerous meetings to implement this agenda:

- several consultative meetings at the ministerial, deputy ministerial, and working levels on security matters to develop coordinated positions on NATO, the basic treaties with the Soviet Union, regional military planning and communication, and the Yugoslav crisis;
- several consultative meetings, at the deputy ministerial and expert levels, to develop a coordinated strategy on integration with the EC and to develop joint positions in the Council of Europe, the *Hexagonale* Group, and other international organizations;
- exploratory meetings of banking and foreign trade officials;
- planning meetings of regional transportation and telecommunications experts;
- several meetings of the trilateral Council of Ambassadors to coordinate ongoing projects;
- several unannounced meetings and workshops on topics ranging from foreign intelligence to projects on subregional, "micro-regional," and general cross-border cooperation;
- a three-day trilateral conference, held on June 28–30, 1991, in Kraków, on the status of political, security, economic, and cultural cooperation among the three countries.[31]

From conversations I had this year with foreign affairs experts in Warsaw, Prague, Bratislava, and Budapest, it appears that there are several spheres in which cooperation will likely yield quick results:

- transportation, highway infrastructure, and telecommunications;
- subregional and microregional projects;
- enterprise-to-enterprise contacts;
- private tourism and retail trade;
- cultural, educational, and youth-exchange projects;
- bilateral foundations to promote cultural, historical, and scientific collaboration.

[29]"Freedom Is Our Bedrock and the Economy Is Our Mainstay. Interview with President Lech Wałęsa," *Mladá Fronta Dnes* (Prague), Sept. 13, 1991 trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 17, 1991, pp. 25–27.

[30]See "Declaration on the Cooperation of the Republic of Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, and the Republic of Poland on the Road to European Integration," loc. cit.

[31]"Central European Cooperation: Challenges and Opportunities," conference organized by the Jagiellonian Foundation, the "Poland in Europe" Foundation, and Editions Spotkania, held on June 28–30, 1991, in Kraków (resolutions of the political and security working groups).

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At the Kraków summit of Central European leaders on October 6, 1991, Czechoslovak President Václav Havel (standing, left) and Polish President Lech Wałęsa (standing, center) exchange agreements while Hungarian Prime Minister József Antall (seated, right) looks on.

—Gamma Liaison.

The Moscow coup was the first major test of the Visegrád alliance. Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest had to make a choice whether to remain silent and await the eventual outcome, or to take a joint public stance on the potentially terrifying implications of a conservative takeover in the USSR.[32] Much to its credit, the Triangle chose the latter. On August 20, a deputy ministerial and expert-level emergency meeting was held in Warsaw. The decisions were prompt and firm. A summit meeting was to be convened the following day (when it became apparent that the coup was collapsing, the summit was postponed until October); a deputy ministerial Standing Committee was established to coordinate trilateral affairs, especially security policies; and a working group on migration was set up to address the prospect of a large-scale influx of refugees from the USSR. The meeting also agreed on the principal points of letters that Wałęsa, Havel, and Antall were to send to the EC and other Western leaders. Since then, additional steps have been taken to widen and deepen trilateral cooperation. For example, according to Lubos Dobrovský, the Czechoslovak minister of defense, the Triangle will coordinate all military activities, including modernizing the military equipment of the Czechoslovak, Polish, and Hungarian militaries.[33]

The second summit of leaders from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary was held in Kraków to assess the results of trilateral cooperation to date and to chart the Triangle's future course. This meeting yielded two documents: the "Kraków Summit Statement of the Foreign Ministers on Links with the North Atlantic Alliance" and the "Kraków Declaration."[34]

The Kraków summit foreign ministerial statement was, for all intents and purposes, a response to the joint statement issued by US Secretary of State Baker and German Minister of Foreign Affairs Genscher on October 2, 1991. The joint statement spoke of the need "to develop NATO's new institutional relationship" with the "new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union" through the development of a "new liaison relationship" between NATO members and former members of the Warsaw Pact within the framework of something called the "North Atlantic Cooperation

[32]See "Attempted Coup in the USSR: East European Reactions," *Report on Eastern Europe*, Aug. 30, 1991, pp. 1–18.

[33]"Strengthening Defense Capabilities. Interview with Defense Minister Lubos Dobrovský," *Rzeczpospolita* (Warsaw), Sept. 9, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 16, 1991, pp. 12–13.

[34]The following is based on the Hungarian text of these documents that was made available to me on October 7, 1991, through the courtesy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic on Hungary.

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Council."[35] Apart from the perceived slight of being lumped together as "new democracies" with the Balkans and the Soviet Union, the Kraków summit participants took exception to the kind of security guarantees that the Baker-Genscher statement of October offered to Central Europe. Rather than "diplomatic liaison" between Central Europe and NATO, the statement said that ". . . it is necessary . . . that our countries' links to NATO be elevated to a qualitatively higher level. There is no place in Europe for different kinds and types of security—it should be the same for everyone." The statement recommended the establishment of a "direct role" for the Triangle in NATO activities.

Of the eight main points of the "Kraków Declaration," three dealt with East-West relations and security issues, one with Yugoslavia, and the remainder with new initiatives for trilateral cooperation. Concerning Yugoslavia, it resorted to fairly blunt language to register the Triangle's dismay with Belgrade's role in the Yugoslav civil war. The prescribed solution—"national self-determination, including independent statehood, full protection of minority rights, and the inviolability of the republics' (pre–civil war) boundaries"—was quite explicit. And so was the offer of the three states to provide personnel to staff a multinational peacekeeping force in Yugoslavia. The declaration also offered the Triangle's participation in future G-24 programs to assist the Soviet Union—either through the so-called "Dienstbier plan" of sending food supplies paid for by the West, or through technical assistance to help spur economic decentralization and marketization in the USSR.

The declaration approved the projects on economic, infrastructural, cultural, and scientific cooperation enumerated above. It also added several new initiatives to the alliance's agenda: the assembly of a "financial working group" and an "energy policy working group"; arrangements to promote trade and protect investments; and the development of joint ventures in commercial banking. Although the declaration stopped short of proposing the institutionalization of the existing clusters of joint undertakings, the phrase "further development and perfection of existing economic and political cooperation" left the door open for this possibility.

Conclusion

When reflecting on the record of the Triangle, one must call attention to its improvised and inherently defensive nature. The participants' shared objective has been survival amidst the rubble of a defunct empire. The most successful aspect of the trilateral relationship has been in the area of shared threat perceptions with reference to: (1) the continuing military threat posed by Moscow; (2) instability and chaos in the East that have led to a breakdown in trade and could lead to mass migration, environmental disasters, etc.; (3) the possible spillover into the Triangle countries of domestic instability in the USSR, Yugoslavia, and Romania.

Originally, the Triangle's primary motivation for cooperating in the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact and CEMA, and in arriving at a common negotiating position on their respective basic treaties with the USSR was to avoid the Finlandization of the three states and to avoid remaining satellites of Moscow. Yet, the Triangle is not only about what its members want to avoid (dependence on Moscow) but also about what they want to promote. They have fully embraced and aggressively institutionalized—even at the risk of domestic instability—the values and ideals of liberal democracy.

As stated above, the East-West dimension of the trilateral relationship is inherently and unavoidably competitive. It is axiomatic that the ability of the three states to observe European norms will be quite different. Another complicating factor is that both individual Western states and Western multilateral institutions such as the EC and NATO will rate Central Europe's efforts in creating *Rechtstaats* and market economies not according to objective criteria but according to subjective judgments. As suggested above, the competition among the three states to be the first to enter Europe is held in check by the Western political community's inclination to treat the new democracies of Central Europe as a unit. This assumption may be convenient, but it is fallacious because it overlooks and tolerates underperformance in the legal-institutional and the economic policy fields by one or more of the partners. It is also axiomatic that bilateral ties are much easier to establish and manage than a multilateral relationship. As collective entities, both the West and the Central European states, often through such vehicles as "Joint Declarations" and "Kraków Declarations," seek to influence and manipulate each other's political and economic behavior while leaving ample room for bilateral chicanery. These considerations suggest that competition will continue to characterize the trilateral relationship. Indeed, as the time of entry for one or two of the states into the EC draws nearer, the trilateral consensus might collapse, and what was once "competition" among the states of Central Europe might become a barroom brawl.

[35] "Joint Statement by Secretary of State James Baker and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany," US Department of State, Office of the Assistant Secretary/Spokesman, Oct. 2, 1991.

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Whereas the cooperative and competitive dimensions of the trilateral relationship are likely to remain in place, the coexistence of the three states might develop either toward greater cooperation or toward greater competition. To be sure, when one considers the principals' political and diplomatic inexperience, one has to acknowledge that a great deal of progress has been made in the seven months between Visegrád and Kraków. Still, it must be kept in mind that the architecture of coexistence rests on three structurally interdependent pillars—military security, political stability, and economic prosperity. The resiliency of the military and economic "pillars" is derived largely from the three partners' common fear of the USSR and from their bilateral and multilateral interaction with the Western community. The strength of the "third pillar" will depend on the three states' ability to establish links among their economic policies (trade, banking, and finance); business activities (industry, agriculture, and commerce); and cultural, educational, scientific, and communications institutions and programs.

The realization of these objectives is not merely desirable; it is the essential condition for future harmonious cooperation among Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. It is also the element of the trilateral relationship today that is the most vulnerable to false starts, mixed signals, and accidental breakdowns. Unless pursued vigorously, inaction on the agenda of substantive regional cooperation could bring down the Visegrád alliance. At present, the latter is kept together as much by the Soviet threat and by President George Bush's supportive telephone calls in stressful moments as by the smiles and political will of Václav Havel, Lech Wałęsa, and József Antall. These are necessary, but not sufficient, conditions for the survival of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary as free and sovereign states in the dangerous Europe of the 1990's.

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Books

Historical Consciousness and the Incorporation of the Soviet Past

J. Thomas Sanders

RICHARD STITES. *Revolutionary Dreams: Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution.* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988.

MARSHALL SHATZ. *Jan Wacław Machajski: A Radical Critic of the Russian Intelligentsia and Socialism.* Pittsburgh, PA, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989.

ZENOVIA A. SOCHOR. *Revolution and Culture: The Bogdanov-Lenin Controversy.* Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1988.

ANTI-SOVIETISM is faddish these days. This profoundly negative evaluation of historical experience is hardly surprising given the well-documented economic turmoil and the painful process of political reform in the Soviet Union.[1] This negative evaluation is, however, grossly overstated.

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The virulent anti-Sovietism of Western observers draws sustenance from a wildly radical and poorly considered rejection of the totality of the Soviet experiment on the part of observers within the Soviet Union. Such thinkers as the economist Vasiliy Selyunin, the philosopher Aleksandr Tsipko, and the film director Stanislav Govorukhin have outdone each other in denying the validity of any part of the Soviet past. Reinforcement of this trend comes from the recent publication of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's works in the Soviet Union, as well as from the translation and publication of such examples of Western cold-war historiography as Robert Conquest's *The Great Terror* and Richard Pipes's *The Russian Revolution.* Like waves in harmonic resonance, the condemnatory currents from within and outside of the Soviet Union are giving rise to ever higher peaks of anti-Sovietism.[2] As a result, there is enormous pressure on Soviet studies, broadly conceived, to participate in this baby-with-the-bath-water discarding of Soviet history.[3]

The practice of denying a significant component of their national life experience is itself an important part of the Russians' past, but it is a part which they very much need to transcend, and it is certainly not one in which the West needs to participate. On the contrary, the Russians, and other Soviet peoples to equal or

[1]This article was essentially completed before the dramatic events of mid-August 1991, and no attempt has been made to integrate those immediate events into this analysis. The arguments of this essay address general problems of what might be labeled "*perestroyka* society." However, it does seem that the attempted coup and its aftermath throw into even greater highlight the issues discussed here.

[2]For a more detailed discussion of these currents within the general Soviet intellectual community and within the community of historians in particular, see Mark von Hagen's as-yet-unpublished paper, "The Stalin Debate and the Reformulation of the Soviet Past."

[3]This sounds overly critical. It is not as if Western Soviet studies has not produced an impressive corpus of analysis. There are, however, conceptual limits within any intellectual system, and, furthermore, this particular framework has nearly outlived its usefulness.

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greater degrees,[4] have a pressing need to incorporate the shadows and light of all aspects of their histories in a single general composition acceptable to the national eye.

Western Russian/Soviet studies —as a corporate body interested in and affected by, but not directly immersed in, the current trauma— could assist in this constructive task. Through an interdisciplinary "intellectual Marshall Plan," we stand to gain a great deal ourselves by way of enormously enriched theoretical perspectives and interpretive approaches for our own disciplines. By helping the peoples of the former Soviet Union gain an historically grounded, critically constructive perspective on their own past, we will profit from the insights and interpretive frameworks generated by a solidly based native Soviet studies community. At the same time, the depoliticization of Western Soviet studies will free us from some of the constraints of our own Left-Right debate and allow us to pursue interesting new questions.

It was often the case in Russian history, however, that promising potentialities went undeveloped because the social base supporting them was too narrow. Therefore, it will not be enough to foster a nuanced view of the past only among the more highly educated strata of the population. There is still a very real possibility of the re-emergence of the phenomenon of two Russias —the Russia of the more educated and intellectually developed groups and the Russia of the common people. If all efforts at developing a balanced historical vision center solely on the educated elite, the common people will be left with an anti-historical, politically authoritarian tradition. It will hardly be surprising, then, if, excluded and ignored, they support the kind of authoritarian, anti-intellectual policies characteristic of much of the Soviet period.

Relying, however, on the central themes of the three books under review here—Richard Stites's stress on the need for positive utopias in *Revolutionary Dreams: Utopian Visions and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution,* the social divisions in late imperial Russia that Marshall Shatz elucidates in *Jan Wacław Machajski: A Radical Critic of the Russian Intelligentsia and Socialism,* and Aleksandr A. Bogdanov's systemic approach with its heavy emphasis on culture, which Zenovia Sochor treats in *Revolution and Culture: The Bogdanov-Lenin Controversy*—we can fashion an alternative way, both more positive and more inclusive, of visualizing the pasts of the peoples, Russian and non-Russian, of the former Soviet Union. By pursuing this goal, all of those who support and benefit from the current intellectual ferment can help to ensure that the "broad popular masses" are not excluded from this enterprise. Otherwise, one of the most important lessons of Russian history will have been missed, and the whole effort may well prove to have been for naught.

IT is a very good time to be a Russian and Soviet specialist. Interest in things Soviet has seldom been as great, and the public profile of Soviet analysts, many of whom are frequent commentators in the media, is at an unprecedentedly high level. Long gone are the sunset years of Leonid Brezhnev and company, when there was minimal general interest and one had almost to justify one's serious intellectual involvement in the subject. Today, there is a fascination among the general public with *le monde russe et soviétique,* which has elevated the status of the profession. However, this heightened stature masks the very real, inherent threat that the profession will lose its equilibrium in the quest for contemporaneity. Defining ourselves exclusively in terms of immediacy and currency will do serious long-term damage to our profession.[5]

Fortunately, this is not the only possibility in the present situation for those who have chosen "Sovietology as a vocation."[6] In fact, far from it. Many elements are in place to make this an era to rival in importance the two most significant previous phases in the development of Western Soviet studies: the postwar *Grundzeit* and the revisionist *Historikerstreit* of the 1960's. For one

[4]In this article, I will discuss a pattern of historical rejectionism specific to the Russian past. Nevertheless, the strictures against the repudiation of the past discussed here apply with the same force to the non-Russian nations. On the one hand, the non-Russian Soviet ethnic groups run the risk of historical demonology, explaining all problems as the result of Russian/Soviet rule and leading to a distorted historical reductionism. On the other hand and in a more complicated way, rejection of the Soviet era can prove detrimental to a comprehensive understanding of a nation's history. In the case of the Georgians, for example, a complete denial of the Soviet era would entail erasing what was arguably the single most important period for the formation of modern Georgian nationalism. Ronald Grigor Suny convincingly argues that "by the early twentieth century, Georgians were a self-conscious nationality with an articulate political leadership, the Mensheviks, who briefly held power in an independent state. But remarkably, and against the original expectations of many observers, *the most complete consolidation of the Georgians as a nation came in the first seven decades of Soviet power.* Although the thrust of Marxism had seemed opposed to the creation of a coherent and separate Georgian nation, the actual evolution of Soviet Georgia resulted in the emergence of a compact and conscious nation prepared to act in its own interests either on its own or in concert with its current government" (my emphasis). *The Making of the Georgian Nation,* Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1988, p. 318.

[5]In fact, this pressure very likely has a lot to do with the extent and strength of the reigning anti-Sovietism.

[6]See "Scholarly Missions: Sovietology as a Vocation," in Stephen F. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience: Politics and History Since 1917,* New York, Oxford University Press, 1985, pp. 3–37.

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thing, despite the dangers of a focus on current events, the field does stand to be re-energized by the enormous changes now taking place in the Soviet Union. Such changes will also attract bright new minds to the field.[7] Another avenue to theoretical and interpretive renewal is via access to important new sources and databases. Soviet archivists and librarians have welcomed the opportunity to work in a less constricted and more cooperative manner with foreign scholars. While we still await the appearance of significant documentary publications from their archival *fondy*, there has been a meaningful opening up of new archival troves.[8] It is to be hoped that the *glasnost'* of *Glavarkhiv* will develop apace and along with it our various disciplines.

Together with these straws in the present-day winds of change, there is another incipient development with incalculable significance for Soviet studies—the emergence of *Soviet* Soviet studies as a legitimate, respectable enterprise.[9] It is an historical anomaly that generally speaking, the most interesting, insightful, and worthwhile studies of the Soviet Union in the fields of sociology, anthropology, economics, legal studies, political science, and so on—and to a certain extent in the field of Russian history—have originated outside of the Soviet Union. To be sure, it is not unknown for foreign scholars to pioneer and excel in the study of another society. To take a case from Russian history, in the second half of the 19th century and up to 1917, certain Russian historians, clearly responding to problems of the day in tsarist society, produced a series of studies of *ancien régime* and revolutionary France, many of which were ground-breaking efforts that surpassed the investigations of the French themselves. But the so-called *école russe* did not dominate French historical study. It is not that Sovietology as we have known it has partially or temporarily fallen under the sway of non-Soviets; the very field itself is the creation of non-Soviets. For too long, the entire interdisciplinary effort has proceeded without a healthy Soviet scholarly community to challenge and invigorate its precepts and its interpretations.[10] Happily, that is changing.

THESE developments in Soviet studies are not occurring in a political vacuum. They have taken place during a time of vigorous popular reaction against both the communist system and the current situation to which that system has given rise. This reaction entails a rejection of nearly the entire Soviet experience.[11] Among a broad cross section of the populace, this defense mechanism against the "terror of history" has taken on the form of a temporal version of *russkaya chekharda* or leap-frog. Jumping over the Soviet era, many people look back to the tsarist era and to a monarchism dusted off and polished up a bit, or at least they partake of a certain nostalgia for the old regime.[12]

The selective rejection of the past is a well-developed Russian tradition. In ancient times, Russian peasants practiced the slash-and-burn method of agriculture: after a few years of farming the same piece of land to exhaustion, they moved to new lands, clearing them by the simple expedient of burning off the forest and underbrush, thereby fertilizing the soil with the ash. This experience (extending, arguably, right up to the present) left an important legacy; it engendered in the Russian people an extensive and expansive approach to problems, as opposed to an intensive, internal

[7]This point should not be overdrawn. One has the general impression that the brain drain of which Professor Cohen warned in the important piece cited above has been stanched and even reversed in recent years, perhaps in part due to Cohen's very warning. Still, the drama of present developments in the Soviet Union should reinforce this process of "cadre renewal."

[8]See R. W. Davies, *Soviet History in the Gorbachev Revolution*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1989. A number of scholars are gaining access to previously inaccessible party archives—Alexander Rabinowitch, J. Arch Getty, Mark von Hagen, Ziva Galili. Problems with archives continue to exist, however; documents and even *fondy* are withheld, and archival access remains to a certain extent a matter of chance.

[9]This is already happening in some areas. One could cite Andrey Berezkin's work in compiling and disaggregating material on recent Soviet elections, undertaking not just voter analysis, but also using these materials as a source for sociological investigation and projection. His data are richer than those of Western scholars, and he is at least their equal theoretically. See his contribution to *Vesna 89: Geografiya i anatomiya parlamentskikh vyborov* (Spring 89: Geography and the Anatomy of Parliamentary Elections), Moscow, Progress, 1990; and the collective effort by A. V. Berezkin, et al., "The Geography of the 1989 Elections of People's Deputies of the USSR (Preliminary Results)," *Soviet Geography* (Silver Spring, MD), October 1989, pp. 607–34.

[10]This is not to say that the Soviet academic community has not produced works of enormous scholarship and erudition. However, taken as a whole, the community is not a healthy and vibrant one.

[11]A ready example of this on the part of the government is the current Gorbachevian fashion of referring to the Brezhnev era as "the period of stagnation" (*period zastoya*).

[12]In the beginning was the word. An instance of popular affirmation of the return to pre-Soviet times is the wave of "urban renewal"—the renaming of cities—going on at present. It is worth noting that the referendum to revive the name St. Petersburg carried by a narrow majority over both Leningrad and Petrograd. Some opposed the renaming because of the expense involved; others associated the name Leningrad with the heroic wartime defense; still others maintained simply enough that Leningrad was the name they had grown up with and St. Petersburg meant nothing to them. I know of no analysis of this vote in terms of social class, education, age group, etc. Such an investigation might reveal a great deal about the social locus of the rejection of the Soviet experience. However that may be, the majority of the population of the city voted to return to the prewar, tsarist name, and it has been so adopted. There are many other examples: Tver' (Kalinin) and Nizhnyy Novgorod (Gorkiy), to name just a couple.

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one.[13] And this is precisely the way many Russians go about formulating their view of history—bundling up a few treasured items, abandoning their roots, and torching that which they do not want in their new environment. From time to time, they return to the original piece of historical ground to try to work it again. Equally important, the very nature of their history has encouraged this tendency; much of it one would rather not have to remember.

This same tendency was also quite pronounced both within the government and within Alexander Herzen's "other" Russia—the Russia of the educated elite. The Russian government has both participated in and contributed enormously to this attitude of rejectionism, partly as a result of the callousness of many of its policies, which the general populace passively repudiates through its approach to history, and partly in its abrupt reversals of policy. Rejectionism is not only evident in Peter the Great's chopping of beards from boyars' faces and smashing of icons, both physical and mental. One also recalls the relative abruptness of the decision to emancipate the serfs, the suddenness of the Stolypin reforms after much official oscillation, the thunderbolt of Nicholas's abdication, the New Economic Policy, collectivization, and so on. The overall result is that one of the enduring problems of the Russians' *Weltanschauung* is their inability to reconcile in one synthetic and synergistic whole the entire spectrum of their historical experience.

When members of the intelligentsia attempted to resolve the complicated issue of the Russian past, they too placed a negative valuation on whole stretches of their history. In the Solov'yevian historical tradition,[14] Russian history could be said to have begun only with Peter, that is, roughly in 1700. The Slavophiles in a sense offered the photographic negative of this picture, arguing that Peter and his fledglings created a deracinated, ahistorical monstrosity that violated the historically developed (yet, somehow, ahistorically created) Russian character. For them, history ended with Peter the Great.

Herzen's creative contribution to Russian social thought was to meld the Western, Enlightenment-based ideal of socialism with the Russian folk "socialism" of the commune. In practice, then, he—and the populists who built on this idea—accepted the Western intellectual legacy of Peter and rejected all the rest "in the name of the people."

The Russian Marxists, of course, worked for the final eradication of the Russian pasts, both "feudal" and "bourgeois," and the anarchists—representatives of one of the most important currents within Russian social and political thought—repudiated almost all historically developed political structures and practices. The incomplete incorporation of the Russians' historical experience did not allow them a Nietzschean escape from the dead weight of a useless legacy,[15] but rather left them with only partial solutions to enormously complex problems.

IN order to move forward and to deal in a truly effective manner with the challenges facing the country, the Soviet people must encompass the past, not exclude it, as the current "totalitarian" anti-Sovietism would have it do.[16] No long-term

[13]Basing his ideas on the work of his teacher, S. M. Solov'yev, V. O. Klyuchevskiy emphasized the migratory nature of the Russian people. This propensity has not ended. In recent years, there has been a noticeable migration of Russians from non-Russian ethnoterritories back to the heartland. See Lee Schwartz, "USSR Nationality Redistribution by Republic, 1979–1989," *Soviet Geography*, April 1991, p. 211.

[14]The dominant view among the elite in Russia from at least the time of his death was that Peter the Great (1682–1725) created the modern Russian state and led the nation onto the stage of history by bringing it forcefully and inextricably into the European political order. This idea received further support from the powerful Hegelian intellectual currents swirling through Russia in the first half of the 19th century. Sergey Mikhailovich Solov'yev, in Nicholas Riasanovsky's considered opinion, "probably the greatest Russian historian of all time," was strongly influenced by these currents. See *The Image of Peter the Great in Russian History and Thought*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 154. Still, as Riasanovsky makes clear, Solov'yev assessed Peter from a very mature historical perspective, reducing the sense that under Peter's tutelage Russia was led from "nonbeing to being." Ibid., p. 165. It is difficult to argue that Solov'yev treated pre-Petrine history ahistorically, since 13 volumes of his 29-volume *History of Russia from Most Ancient Times* deal with Russia to the time of Peter. Solov'yev did, however, consider Peter a genius and world-historical figure who led the people into the battle of Poltava, out of which "there was born for Europe, for the common European life, a new great people; and not only one people: in the thunder of that battle, there was born an entire new race, the Slavic race, which had found for itself a worthy representative, with the aid of which it could rise to a mighty and glorious historical life. A new epoch dawned in European history." *Publichnyye chteniya o Petre Velikom* (Public Lectures on Peter the Great), Moscow, 1872, cited in ibid., p. 73. Many Russians missed Solov'yev's nuance and continued to view Russian history as beginning with Peter.

[15]Nietszche contended that an "excessive" concentration on the past inhibited human behavior. Concerned as he was with the free creative assertion of the individual existential agent, his approach was essentially ahistorical. Leaving aside the difficulties of this position, I find little that is free and self-defining in the Russian approaches discussed here. I do find an inadequate resolution of outstanding problems and issues. See Friedrich Nietszche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, New York, Liberal Arts Press, 1949.

[16]There are, of course, countercurrents in Russia. New historical journals are being planned and launched, documents published, and so on. In this way, the "blank spots" of the Soviet past are being filled in. Nor is this the exclusive territory of professional historians or even of the more educated strata. People whose family members perished or disappeared in the terror, united in the various *Memorial* organizations or acting on their own, are trying to uncover the truth

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resolution of this problem will emerge as long as the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 is written off simply as an aberrant historical eruption and the Soviet era as an historical interruption. In point of fact, not only the period from 1917 to the present is being erased from historical memory, but the years 1914 to 1917 are also being omitted. Thus, the nostalgia for the old regime is of an antebellum variety.[17] This is important, not for the purposes of casting blame, but for establishing historical balance. With the issue of the tsarist government's entry into World War I eliminated from consideration, it is possible to cast too rosy a light on the prewar years and to see the Civil War as merely bloodthirsty and inhuman. In fact, the horror—both White and Red—of the Civil War grew directly out of the organized insanity of World War I.[18]

Systems theory offers one set of analytical tools for the reconceptualization of late imperial history and Soviet history together as a series of efforts to rebalance an out-of-kilter mechanism. This theory conceives of a system as "a complex of interdependencies between parts, components, and processes that involves discernible regularities of relationship. . . ."[19] Change and adjustment are natural realignments of a system, which has "a tendency toward a state of equilibrium, i. e., the system tends to maintain itself through various processes whenever it is disturbed, either from within or without its boundaries."[20]

One real disadvantage of the systems approach is that it tends to make any system seem "functional"—no matter how inequitable or inhumane that system is.[21] It is also quite easy to fail to discern the true nature of internal adjusting mechanisms by regarding them as a normal part of any social system, so that the action of the police can become routinized as mere law enforcement, ignoring elements of the forcible maintenance of privileges based on gender, class, ethnicity, race, religion, or other factors.

On the other hand, systems theory enables one to see all parts of the whole in an interconnected fashion. That is also, after all, one of the enduring strengths of Marxism, and it seems in some ways fitting and natural that as Zenovia Sochor details for us in her study of the Bogdanov-Lenin controversy, one of the pioneers of systems theory was a rogue Russian Marxist, Aleksandr A. Bogdanov. Bogdanov was an early member of the social democratic movement in Russia and a close collaborator of Lenin's in the early years of Bolshevism. Bogdanov later broke with Lenin, vigorously contesting certain of the Bolshevik leader's political, ideological, and intellectual positions.[22]

Differences over the nature of the base-superstructure linkage served as the starting point for the heated and prolonged theoretical struggle between Bogdanov and Lenin. One of the weaker systemic linkages in Marxist theory is that which is supposed to exist between base and superstructure. In its Leninist variant, this linkage became rather crude and automatic. Indeed, many of Lenin's more murderous and vindictive policies can be seen as attempts to inflame class hatred with the aim of sealing an identification of social position and class values.

By contrast, Bogdanov's approach had two interrelated elements to recommend it. First, he reduced Marxism's emphasis on conscious exploitation of one class by another, shifting the focus to the system itself. Second, this shift in focus enabled Bogdanov to view the lower classes less heroically and more realistically and to comprehend the distorting impact that their harsh class and social experience had had on their perspectives. As a result, he understood that the working class would not automatically embody the humane values expected under socialism. Bogdanov therefore argued that the social democratic movement ought to take on a much more rigorous educative mission to offset the negative life lessons of poverty and brutality to which the lower classes were routinely exposed. Unfortunately and perhaps ineluctably, this more nuanced and more comprehensive ef-

about their relatives. This is an extraordinarily painful—and necessary—experience. The past cannot be denied. For the time being, however, each new finding will be like an exposé, further reinforcing the tendency to reject the entire Soviet experience.

[17]For warnings about possible "blank spots" in the historical memories of some East European peoples, see Jerzy Jedlicki, "The Revolutions of 1989: The Unbearable Burden of History," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), July-August 1990, pp. 39–34, and the commentary by Roman Szporluk, "The Burden of History—Made Lighter by Geography?" ibid., pp. 45–48.

[18]On the connection of the prewar political system, the Great Power status of Russia, and the decision to go to war, see Geoffrey Hosking, *The Russian Constitutional Experiment*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1973; and Dietrich Geyer, *Russian Imperialism*, Leamington Spa, Berg, 1987.

[19]Talcott Parsons, "Social Systems," Section II of "Systems Analysis," in David L. Sills, Ed., *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, n. p., The Macmillan Company and the Free Press, 1968, Vol. 15, p. 458.

[20]William C. Mitchell, "Political Systems," Section III of "Systems Analysis," in ibid., p. 473.

[21]In Parsons's words, "The cultural (pattern-maintenance) system centers on the institutionalization of cultural value patterns, which, at the general cultural level, may be regarded as moral." Parsons, loc. cit., p. 463.

[22]An impressive body of literature on Bogdanov has sprung up in recent years. See Sochor, pp. 6–10, for a brief biography and discussion of the literature. Her bibliographical notes 9, 10, 11, and 18 are especially helpful. See also Alexander Vucinich, *Social Thought in Tsarist Russia: The Quest for a General Science of Society, 1861–1917*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1976, esp. Ch. 8.

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fort was not pursued to much purpose, losing out to the more immediately pragmatic and power-oriented policies of Lenin.

We need to take a cue from Bogdanov and analyze the current situation in the Soviet Union from a systems perspective with a strong emphasis on culture. We can thus envision the upheavals of the first years of this century, the war years, and the entire Soviet period as a prolonged systemic adjustment on the part of the Russian socio-political order to the massive socio-economic transformations initiated in Europe and affecting the entire world in socio-economic, political, and military terms. This formulation of the problem allows us to transcend the constricting categories of the past. Hence, there is no need to demonize either the tsarist elite, which failed to steer the country through the necessary changes in the prewar years, or the Soviet elite, whose leadership has of late come up so short. Instead, we ought to look for the limiting factors that contributed to their joint downfall.

While shifting the focus away from the elites, we can also move away from the view of the noble *narod*. In Bogdanovite terms, we can begin to see that however unfortunate—and however much a result of factors beyond its control—the Soviet populace, as the product of an unhealthy social order, could scarcely have avoided some disfiguring scars stemming from its experiences. For example, violence was one of the distinguishing features of tsarist society.[23] And yet, there is no general study of the role of violence in that society. Enormously magnified by the brutalizing experience of World War I, this is one of the central components of the social basis of Stalinism. It remains unexplored, I suspect, because those most likely to do this sort of socio-historical study are ideologically on the Left, and for them this is too much like blaming the victim.[24] Furthermore, there is probably a reluctance to contribute to the reigning anti-Sovietism and anti-Russianism in American society.[25] Viewing the whole systemically, however, and in a *durée un peu plus longue,* frees us to examine vital questions outside of any planned economy of blame or exoneration. This approach, combined with the critical perspectives flashing forth from an emerging and energized community of native Soviet analysts, makes it all the more likely that Western, and especially American, Sovietologists can break free from the intellectually inhibiting constraints that I discussed above.

In this vein, we can answer the question "What was the revolution about?"[26] by depicting the painful transformation of a poorly educated, peasant society dominated by a Russian elite into a relatively modern, urbanized society with multiple centers of ethnic consciousness and political representation. Hence, although innumerable problems remain, the Russian and Soviet social organization and polity may be in a position for the first time in their history to create a democratic order in which the individual—every individual and not just the socio-political elite and the well-educated—is respected.

As argued above, the systems approach considers modern Russian/Soviet society to be in a state of systemic disequilibrium that is in the process of stabilizing. An enduring equilibrium requires incorporation of a nation's historical experience, because the past contains so much that is necessary for a successful resolution of present problems. For example, people throughout the Soviet Union have a great need at present for human hope and vitality. They can find a model for these ideals in the thought of the leftist utopians of the late imperial period. However, these visionaries, who in their own day were assailed by the neo-Kantian intellectuals of the *Vekhi* movement,[27] are castigated these days as proto-Stalinists.[28] Reevaluating this aspect of the Russians' historical experience would legitimate the rehabilitation of the leftist intelligentsia, which for all its faults, contained people of good conscience

[23]A convenient place to look for examples of the violence routinized in tsarist society, and for much more, is Reginald Zelnik's marvelous edition of the autobiography of the "Russian Bebel," Semeon Kanatchikov. See *A Radical Worker in Tsarist Russia: The Autobiography of Semeon Ivanovich Kanatchikov,* Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1986.

[24]Howard Zinn reminds us that "the lines are not always clear. . . . the victims, themselves desperate and tainted with the culture that oppresses them, turn on other victims." On the other hand, while we should "try not to overlook the cruelties that victims inflict on one another as they are," in his powerful image, "jammed together in the boxcars of the system," we should also remember that " 'the cry of the poor is not always just, but if you don't listen to it, you will never know what justice is'." Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States,* New York, Harper Perennial Edition, 1990, p. 10.

[25]See the essay-review by Marc Raeff, "Consequences of *Glasnost'*," *Problems of Communism,* March-April 1990, pp. 105–08, in which he criticizes the latest edition of the Marquis de Custine's *Empire of the Czar: A Journey Through Eternal Russia,* with its distorted view of the Russians. That the publication of this bilious, tendentious text has been something of a cottage industry in American Soviet studies is indicative of our national anti-Russian prejudices.

[26]Posed by Sheila Fitzpatrick in *The Russian Revolution,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1982.

[27]The *Vekhi* movement was named after an anthology of articles by a number of prominent, like-thinking intellectuals—Nikolay Berdyayev and Peter Struve are the most famous—who broke with Marxism and the political Left and looked for renewal in spiritual values. See Marshall Shatz and Judith Zimmerman, Trans. and Eds., "*Vekhi* (Signposts): A Collection of Articles on the Russian Intelligentsia," *Canadian Slavic Papers* (Toronto), Summer 1968–Autumn 1971.

[28]See especially the interesting, but flawed and slightly dangerous, work by the social philosopher Aleksandr S. Tsipko, *Is Stalinism Really Dead?* trans. from Russian by E. A. Tichina and S. V. Nikheev, San Francisco, CA, Harper, 1990. In fact, Tsipko is a latter-day Vekhist.

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and insight (such as Bogdanov) who were attempting to deal with an impossible situation.

Catherine II also criticized the utopianism of a "leftist *intelligent*" when she dismissed the reform projects proposed by the philosophe Denis Diderot, saying that he wrote on paper while she had to write on human flesh. Those ready to ostracize historically and morally the leftist "utopian" intelligentsia must bear in mind that the majority of them—hoping to help humanity—wrote projects intended for paper, not flesh, and that in many instances a much larger project was ultimately written, against their will and sometimes on their own flesh.

IF the leftist intelligentsia and the utopians were attacked (and are being attacked) by other members of the intelligentsia, they were also under assault from below, an assault thoroughly investigated by Marshall Shatz in his book on Jan Wacław Machajski. It is vital to keep constantly in mind the legacy of class chasms—and of the hatred they engendered. This hatred took on many forms, one of the starkest of which was "Makhayevism." In the summer of 1920, the historian Nikolay Ivanovich Kareyev gave a public talk in the countryside "on the life and activity of Marx." During the course of his talk, a note was sent to him by a member of the audience accusing him of concealing "the conspiracy by which the whole intelligentsia was with tsarism against the *narod*."[29] Consciously or not, this was a manifestation of Makhayevism, which understood the activity of the leftist intelligentsia as an attempt to use the people to make a revolution from which the intelligentsia itself would benefit. "The result," in Shatz's words, "was the first systematic theory of socialism as the ideology not of the proletariat but of a new class of aspiring rulers" (p. 42). This social philosophy—based as it was on a suspicion of the *beloruchki* (the "white hands") or, as Machajski came to represent them, everyone with a diploma—also rejected any collaboration or cooperation between classes.

Condemnation of the leftist intelligentsia from below together with the attack on it by the non-leftist intelligentsia (indeed, *Vekhi* was even sardonically characterized as "Makhayevism from above" [cited in Shatz, p. 143]) typified the lack of social cohesion in late tsarist society. Makhayevism was not a major intellectual current, but it speaks to the enduring problem of the distance between those with specialized knowledge and those whose needs the knowledge is supposed to serve, a problem structurally rooted in the modern specialization of labor and of knowledge. This polarization contributed enormously to the consolidation of Stalinism, in which a bureaucratic, ultimately terroristic, apparatus substituted itself for a fragmented society as a social basis of the state.[30]

The Soviet experience has gone no small distance toward reducing those divisions within Soviet society, especially when compared with the situation in tsarist Russia, but contemporary circumstances threaten to revive them. Thus, another of the historical lessons that must be borne in mind in the current situation is an awareness that Makhayevism could reemerge if a legitimate democracy providing for the genuine social welfare and a popularly oriented educational and cultural system are not crafted.[31] This lesson is particularly important, since it is in vogue these days to cite the market as the deus ex machina that will extricate the Soviet system from its current dilemma. Whatever else the market does, it will exacerbate social divisions and, if left unchecked, could well contribute to a neo-Stalinist backlash.[32]

BY reconceptualizing the Soviet era as part of a historical continuum with the tsarist experience, and

[29]Cited by Vasiliy Pavlovich Zolotarev in "The Historian Nikolay Ivanovich Kareyev and his Memoirs *Prozhitoye i perezhitoye*" in N. I. Kareyev, *Prozhitoye i perezhitoye* (To Experience and to Suffer), Leningrad, 1990, p. 29.

[30]This is the major interpretive position of Moshe Lewin, "The Social Background of Stalinism," in Robert C. Tucker, Ed., *Stalinism: Essays in Historical Interpretation*, New York, Norton, 1977, pp. 111–36.

[31]A valuable and much overlooked book is James C. McClelland's *Autocrats and Academics: Education, Culture and Society in Tsarist Russia*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979. McClelland demonstrates the distorted, top-heavy nature of the tsarist educational system. Similar, if less extreme, difficulties trouble the contemporary American system, because of the university's emphasis on publication and research.

It may be the case in areas such as Central Asia, which is not noted for strong traditions of democratic government, that democracy will not be an essential aspect of a stable new system, so long as socio-economic and cultural-educational performance conform to the expectations of the various peoples.

[32]As has been pointed out, "Markets neither came into existence spontaneously . . . nor are they sustained without the considerable force of state coercive and ideological apparatuses; nor have they proved capable of resolving major social and political dilemmas. . . . Furthermore, markets are not neutral in their social and economic consequences. . . ." Mark von Hagen, "The Stalin Question," *The Nation* (New York), Mar. 25, 1991, p. 286. See also Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, New York, Rinehart and Co., 1944, p. 140. Contesting the "liberal creed," Polanyi argues that "the free market was opened and kept open by an enormous increase in continuous, centrally organized, and controlled interventionism. . . . the introduction of free markets, far from doing away with the need for control, regulation, and intervention, enormously increased their range." For his part, Eric Wolf demonstrates that the choice of entering the capitalist world market "was rarely free." Usually, "it was imposed by force, or by constraints stemming from market domination by powerful participants. Coercion or constraint . . . were of the essence of the process; they were not epiphenomena." Each region entering the "circuits of capital" "had to reorganize . . . to intensify capital growth, or else fall under the wheels of the chariot of progress." Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1982, p. 314.

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viewing them together as a difficult path toward resolution of problems posed by the past and ultimately leading to a more balanced and healthy social formation, the peoples of the former Soviet Union can overcome the conceptual sterility of the present and gird themselves for the still difficult, but realizable, passage into the future.[33] But the peoples of the former Soviet Union still need a positive vision of the future. Utopia—the creative projection into the future—has not fared well in the Soviet Union, as a result of its identification with the anti-human excesses that have marred significant stretches of Soviet history. Utopia is currently, as Richard Stites tells us, "a term of bitter derision among Soviet dissidents and émigrés," equated with "an outdated and rickety system that is seen as false, hypocritical, and repressive" (p. 250). But a complete rejection of utopia leaves one with either "reality," however grim and uncomforting, or with some idealized version of the pre-Soviet past, a sort of conservative utopia.

The Russian and Soviet historical understanding thus requires an adaptive self-conception, a new myth, a *utopian* reconsolidation of the past.[34] It need not be a whitewashing of the past. In this vein, one thinks of Richard Hofstadter's *The American Political Tradition,* which, even while revealing the less-than-positive aspects of important American political figures (for example, John C. Calhoun and Teddy Roosevelt), manages to affirm as dominant a tradition that is moral, humane, democratic, and popular. Something similar can be done for the Russo-Soviet political tradition by drawing on such figures as Boris Godunov, the Archpriest Avvakum, Tsaritsa Sophia and Prince Vasiliy Golitsyn, Empress Catherine and the Panin brothers, Speranskiy, Loris-Melikov, Bogdanov, Aleksandra Kollontay, Khrushchev, Kosygin, and Sakharov and Bonner, with Konstantin Pobedonostsev in Calhoun's negative role. This list is quickly devised and may seem trivial; the task itself and the overall agenda are not. Utopia must be refurbished in the form of some kind of positively critical myth that explains the torments of the past as part of the experience necessary to reach a stable, just social order.[35]

Moshe Lewin has suggested that the more forcefully and artificially one attempts to speed the course of change, the more of the past one retains.[36] Rather than force the Soviet experience into some Western Procrustean bed, the global community of scholars dedicated to the study of those societies that comprised the old Soviet Union could extricate from the Soviet and pre-Soviet pasts those elements from which the former Soviet peoples can fashion a more acceptable future. For example, as World War II demonstrated, for all their other failings, one thing that the communists did well was mobilize to face crisis situations. Is it possible that the communists' organizational expertise has prepared the former Soviet peoples for the current situation? Put more neutrally, what has been the impact of communist organizational approaches on the capacity of the Soviet peoples for self-organization? Along the same line, is it absolutely heretical to propose that Soviet nationality policy, with all of its violations of "socialist legality" and assaults on national rights, somehow contributed to the readiness with which various Soviet national groups responded to opportunities inherent in the present situation by helping forge national consciousness, means of national self-expression (written languages), modern national elites, and even practical political expertise? However one views these particular problems, the conclusion is the same: we must write through, and not write off or write out, the Soviet period.

The point is not simply that we cannot return to what existed before Lenin because of all the changes that have occurred. Horrible, unspeakable things happened under communism, but, ironically, it may have created some of the sociopolitical bases for democracy. The society emerging from the ashes of the Russian empire was not capable of supporting a democratic political order. It is entirely possible that one of the unintended consequences of Soviet rule is that it created a society that could well prove capable of sustaining a pluralist

[33]The Russians are not unique in this matter. In a somewhat similar way, the French have had to work through the monarchist-republican-imperial conflict left to them as a legacy of their great revolution. In fact, many peoples with troubled historical experiences have difficulty reconciling all of them in a facile whole. The most instructive instance may be the German postwar case, but the historiography of the Reconstruction era in the American South may also lend useful insights.

[34]To a certain extent every national history is a myth. For the United States, that myth is generally triumphal and untroubled. Our classroom maps show the "Growth of the United States"; our movement across the continent is expansion, not colonization. This movement is somehow natural, organic; its destiny is *manifest* for all to see. There are numerous painful socio-economic and political legacies of our past in contemporary America, yet the negative aspects of our past seem to fit quite comfortably beneath the bright beacon of our national self-image as Lady Liberty.

[35]Using Hayden White's conception of history and its tasks, we should overturn the skepticism of the "ironic" mode in favor of a more positive mode of discourse. See Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe,* Baltimore, MD, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973, p. 433.

[36]"Incidentally, the peculiar factor of haste should be underlined and its influence explored. . . . It is worth venturing, quite tentatively, on the basis of the Soviet experience, the following maxim: The quicker you break and change, the more of the old you re-create." Lewin, loc. cit., p. 126.

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system. Whatever else they did, the communists forged in the Soviet Union an urbanized, literate society, built a formally democratic institutional framework, and used the political rhetoric of constitutionalism and popular sovereignty. The socio-economic and political ambitions of the communists led them to pursue policies that transformed the society and ultimately rendered the communist system superfluous.[37]

IN the glare of the transformation now going on in the old Soviet Union, Western Soviet studies must live up to its name and not lose sight of the Soviet period. By focusing in a positive way on the enduring continuity of historical experience, we can assist in the development of an autonomous Soviet studies discipline in its native land and end the artificial prominence of the West in this discipline. In turn, these developments will help us break free from our own ideological presuppositions and thereby enrich the whole field.

We can also further the popular recovery of the past as a necessary stage in the movement forward of the Russians as well as of the other peoples of the Soviet empire. In so doing, we should bear in mind that failure to incorporate the *narod* in this project, failure to overcome the centuries-long "*otryv ot mass*" (alienation of the masses) that has tormented Russian and Soviet society, will erode the social support necessary for evolutionary change. With that lesson in mind and with a little thought and effort, the West could aid in the popular dissemination of this reconstituted past.[38] In addition, whether from moral or merely pragmatic considerations, we must keep before the public eye the Russians' deeply rooted tradition of social leveling, which runs counter to the principles of a market economy and its likely effects. Finally and most fundamentally, we must remember that if the Russian and other former Soviet peoples are able to overcome their current situation, it will be at least partially due to lessons learned during the life span of the Soviet system.

[37]In a similar way, although Gorbachev is largely a superfluous man at present, it is essential to remember that the formation of the current constellation of social and political forces would have been unimaginable without him.

[38]Something like this happened, in fact, in postwar Berlin, in the western sector of which libraries and even a university were opened with substantial financial backing as a means of making sure that democratic institutions could take root.

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The Russian Revolution in Comparative Perspective

David B. Rivkin, Jr., and Lee A. Casey

RICHARD PIPES. *The Russian Revolution*. New York, Knopf, 1991.

SIMON SCHAMA. *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*. New York, Knopf, 1989.

W. A. SPECK. *Reluctant Revolutionaries*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988.

> *There is nothing more dangerous for the state than men who want to govern kingdoms on the basis of maxims which they cull from books.*
>
> **—Cardinal Richelieu.**[1]

FOR the second time in less than a century, despotism has fallen in Russia. This past August, Communist hard-liners made a last ditch effort to preserve their bankrupt regime by arresting Mikhail Gorbachev and attempting to rule the USSR through a military/party junta. Their failure was total and swift. The conspirators were foiled by the blank refusal of the Soviet people—including large numbers of military and secret police officials, long considered the diehard defenders of the party's rule—to accept the coup; by Russian President Boris Yel'tsin's resolve; and by their own doddering incompetence.[2] Instead of removing Gorbachev permanently from power—and thereby reversing the various reforms he had set in motion—the plotters merely accelerated the demise of Communist rule. In the coup's aftermath, the once mighty Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) has been effectively banned throughout most of the USSR. The Soviet Union itself appears to be on the verge of dissolution—many of its constituent republics, including Ukraine, have already declared their independence. The centrally planned Soviet economy has collapsed, and nothing viable has replaced it yet.

The coup and its rejection capped the series of incredible transformations that have occurred in the internal and external affairs of the Soviet Union since Gorbachev came to power in 1985. In a very real sense, the events of last August are a final chapter[3] in the historical drama that began in 1917—or even earlier, if one considers the historical antecedents of the Bolshevik Revolution.

The August events have major implications for our understanding of the entire Soviet revolutionary tradition. To begin with, the relative lack of violence with which communism was consigned to the "dustbin of history" certainly resolves one of the key questions of Sovietology, debated ad infinitum by Western and Soviet scholars alike—whether

[1]Cardinal de Richelieu, *Testament Politique*, ed. by L. André, 1947, p. 289, as quoted in J. H. Elliott, *Richelieu and Olivares*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 27.

[2]Moreover, the plotters had no coherent, long-term program. Although they intensely disliked *perestroyka*, it certainly did not seem that they were trying to rally the people under the banners of orthodox Marxism-Leninism.

[3]I.e., the August events are not just another stage in the ebb and flow observed in revolutions as different segments of the revolutionary leadership struggle for power while seeking to advance their preferred versions of the revolution's ideals.

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communism was an alien construct imposed on Russian society by violence and maintained by force, or whether a "kinder, gentler" communism was possible. The "Keystone Kop" conspirators of August, whatever their other failings, were right in one respect—the communism with a human face that Gorbachev believed he could bring about could not survive.[4] So alien to human nature were the economic and social constructs of communism that once its political rule was undermined, these collapsed virtually overnight.[5] In the end, no significant stratum of Soviet society, even the *nomenklatura* itself, was willing to fight and die for communism.[6]

Revolutionary upheavals, even those motivated by the love of freedom and democracy, are a dangerous enterprise, if not necessarily in and of themselves, then at least in terms of the forces they unleash. Thus, although the Russian Revolution appears to have run its course, it is still very unclear whether its end game will result in the sea of blood that engulfed its beginning in October 1917.[7] In the aftermath of communist rule, there remain, together with genuine yearnings for democracy, enough ethnic hatreds and economic privations to fuel a full-fledged civil war, or a protracted period of internecine strife.

How these matters play out has a greater immediacy and urgency for the United States and its allies than did the dénouement of the 1917 revolution. Then, Russia was only one of several great European powers engaged in the world war. To be sure, its slide into revolution, and then civil war, had significant geopolitical consequences. In a pre-nuclear world, however, these were manageable. The USSR, on the other hand, was one of only two superpowers, and it retains the tangible evidence of its one-time exalted status in the form of tens of thousands of nuclear warheads.

WHILE no one can predict the ultimate outcome of recent events in the Soviet Union, some guidance may be culled from reviewing the experience of the first chapter of the Russian revolutionary saga—the events of 1917. Our understanding can be further enriched both by going into the Russian roots of that revolution and also comparing it with the revolutionary experiences of France and of England.[8]

Of the three great European revolutions—the English, French and Russian—only the English Revolution of 1688 was "bloodless." The Bolshevik revolutionaries of 1917, quite consciously, followed the pattern of the French Revolution, beginning with the pursuit of high ideals, and ending in a charnel house. In comparing these revolutions with the events that culminated last August, we are fortunate to have available three outstanding recent works—Richard Pipes's *The Russian Revolution*, Simon Schama's *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*, and W. A. Speck's *Reluctant Revolutionaries*.[9]

Their timeliness aside, all three books are excellent and well-written histories. In presenting a considered analysis of the events they describe, none of the authors descends into the domain of historical determinism. Although the events of 1688, 1789, and 1917 are traced,

[4]To be sure, as argued by a well-known Soviet dissident, Vladimir Bukovsky, Gorbachev's blunder was entirely understandable. "No KGB analyst could fathom the mistrust and hatred the people of Eastern Europe [and of the Soviet Union] felt for any communist leader, 'liberal' or 'conservative'." V. Bukovsky, "What to Do About the Soviet Collapse," *Commentary* (New York), September 1991, p. 22.

[5]Despite ridicule from more "sophisticated" critics, "hard-line" Soviet observers long contended that communism would sooner or later collapse of its own weight. Paradoxically, these sober-minded observers of the Soviet scene have recently been criticized for supposedly overestimating Soviet strength over the last decade. Yet, as rotten as the Soviet edifice was, it still posed a threat to the West. Analysts cannot be fairly faulted for failing to predict the precise date and hour of the Soviet collapse.

[6]The question of whether the Bolsheviks were ever popular has provoked much controversy. To begin with, there is no doubt that they failed to win a majority of the Constituent Assembly seats in the first free Russian election, held shortly after the October 1917 Revolution. Still, the relentless Soviet propaganda machine may have succeeded in making communism attractive to some segments of the population, at least for some time. For a discussion of this issue, see Walter Laqueur, *Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations*, New York, Scribner's, 1990, and its review by Leon Aron and subsequent exchange of letters in the April and September 1991 issues of *Commentary*.

[7]Some chilling parallels are already evident. The swiftness of the collapse of communist authority rivals the events of 1917, described by Richard Pipes in the first of the volumes reviewed here: "The February Revolution had many striking features that distinguish it from other revolutionary upheavals. But the most striking of all was the remarkable rapidity with which the Russian state fell apart. It was as if the greatest empire in the world, covering one-sixth of the earth's surface, were an artificial construction, without organic unity, held together by wires all of which converged in the person of the monarch. The instant the monarch withdrew, the wires snapped and the whole structure collapsed in a heap" (p. 336).

[8]Having used the term "revolution" a number of times in this essay, a definition of it is overdue.

For purposes of the discussion that follows, our working hypothesis is that "revolution" connotes a fundamental reordering of an existing polity through extra-constitutional means. This reordering may, depending on the new political order being established, also involve a great deal of social and economic change. This, in turn, may or may not entail a great deal of violence.

In adopting this definition, we consciously eschew a broader, Marxian definition according to which "a revolution embraces all aspects of social life and activity." See, e.g., Christopher Hill, "A Bourgeois Revolution?" *The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill: People and Ideas in Seventeenth Century England*, Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press, 1986, Vol. 3, pp. 94, 114. Whether a revolution affects other aspects of social life, once political power is secured, depends very much on the goals of the revolutionaries, and even more fundamentally on whether they establish a limited or unlimited government.

[9](Fn. 9 follows on p. 126.)

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to a lesser or greater degree, to developments in prior years, neither Pipes, nor Schama, nor Speck argues that these revolutions were preordained. The authors' emphasis is not upon inexorable social and economic forces, unknown and unknowable to the participants, but upon the men and women who starred in these great dramas.[10]

Each author also explores and answers three key questions one can ask about any revolution. First, why did the old regime fall? Second, why did the revolution evolve in a particular fashion—from an initial set of moderate reforms to a radical upheaval in the social, political, and economic order, for example? And, last but not least, what was the role of violence and terror in the revolution?

In this context, the French and Russian revolutions naturally invite comparison, among other reasons, because the revolutionaries of 1917 consciously looked to 1789 for inspiration. Additionally, both revolutions followed a similar pattern—the initial replacement of an "absolute," albeit reforming, monarchy by a moderate, but weak democratic regime; the stress that external events put on the society and the new government; the capture of the revolution by radicals determined to remake society in their own image, regardless of the cost in human suffering; the inability of these revolutionaries to gain widespread popular support for their programs; and the final descent into terror.

The pattern of the English Revolution was very different. The "Glorious Revolution" was conducted with a decorum bred from the experience of a civil war only a generation before. The large, regular military forces assembled by the contenders never clashed, and the Revolution itself was completed in the space of a few months. During this time, the population remained, for the most part, quiescent. The principal beneficiary of the Revolution, Prince William of Orange, made certain that his rival, King James II, "escaped" to the continent, so that the question of what to do with a fallen king did not arise. The culmination of the Revolution was marked not by the deposed king's execution, but by the coronation of his replacements, and their acceptance of the "Declaration of Rights." The dramatically different path followed by the English Revolution—marked by political consensus and peaceful change—and its similarity to the events of August, makes its inclusion in the discussion all the more poignant.

RICHARD Pipes's thorough and thoughtful volume—the product of a lifetime of study—presents a detailed account of Russia's descent into an unprecedented tyranny, a system that made tsarist authoritarianism, or even the Mongol occupation, pale by comparison. Appropriately enough, Pipes dedicates the book to the Revolution's victims.

Although Pipes recognizes that the seeds of the Russian Revolution were sown at least as early as the mid-19th century, he begins his account of the revolution proper with the general university strike of 1899. At that time, the Russian government canceled—as a danger to public order—the annual student celebration of the founding of the University of St. Petersburg. Violent demonstrations resulted, and the movement was quickly taken over by radicals, who used it as an opportunity to politicize the students. A general university strike ensued, its leaders were duly arrested, and a manifesto was issued calling for the overthrow of the Russian monarchy.

Pipes selects this episode primarily because it demonstrates the hardening of the attitudes of the Left and Right that made the subsequent extra-constitutional change in Russia all but inevitable. It was, he writes, a "microcosm of the tragedy of late Imperial Russia: it illustrated to what extent the Revolution was the result not of insufferable conditions but of irreconcilable attitudes" (p. 7). In this irreconcilable division of society over the shape of the future lay Russia's tragedy. Neither the tsarist government nor the opposition intellectuals were interested in compromise and reform, only in reaction or revolution.

Pipes offers a careful and nuanced picture of the old regime's final years. In 1900, Russia remained Europe's last true absolute monarchy, an autocracy with dis-

[9]We recognize that there is an extensive literature on the phenomenon of revolution, treating it from a philosophical or political science perspective. This literature includes Hannah Arendt's *On Revolution*, New York, Viking, 1963; Crane Brinton's *Anatomy of Revolution*, New York, Vintage, 1952; Barrington Moore's *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Boston, Beacon, 1969; and Theda Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979. There are dozens of others. The literature on just the Russian, French, and English Revolutions is also vast, including classic works by de Tocqueville, Carlyle, Macaulay, Chamberlain, and Carr. Thus, attempting even a cursory review of the written works in this field is a task we happily leave to others. Our goal is much more modest—merely to review three of the more recent accounts, while drawing on the events of recent years and months in Moscow insofar as they bear directly on Pipes's analysis of the Russian Revolution.

[10]Schama, in particular, consciously adopts the "biographical approach" to the history of the French Revolution, trying to "listen attentively to the voice of the citizens whose lives it describes, even when those voices are at their most cacophonous" (p. xvi).

Ironically, despite the contrary claims of Marxist orthodoxy, the actual evolution of Bolshevik policy was also intensely personal. As Pipes observes: "Although they claimed to be a political party, the Bolsheviks were really nothing of the kind. They resembled rather an order or cohort gathered around a chosen leader. What held them together was not a program or a platform—these could change from one day to the next in conformity with the leader's wishes—but the person of the leader" (p. 814).

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tinctive "patrimonial" features.[11] The incumbent autocrat was, however, a poor specimen. Nicholas II was a modest, cultured, and basically decent man, who, writes Pipes, "lacked the intelligence and character to rule," yet also lacked the imagination to accept the role of a constitutional monarch—a role for which, as Pipes points out, he was eminently suited by disposition (p. 57).

Instead, Nicholas blindly persisted in preserving the autocracy, believing—erroneously—that to do otherwise would violate his coronation oath.[12] Given this view of his authority, Nicholas saw those constitutional reforms that, in the aftermath of the Revolution of 1905, were forced on him as unfortunate expedients, necessary to ensure public order, but imposing no real limits on his authority.

The opposition—some of them "professional revolutionaries, a new breed who dedicated their lives to plotting political violence" (p. 152)—also were unwilling to accept any compromises. "From the day the constitution went into force," Pipes writes, "they exploited every opportunity to wage war against the monarchy. The radical intellectuals rejected the very principles of constitutional monarchy and parliamentary government" (p. 156). The most radical of them had something more grand in mind—the remaking not only of government and society but of man himself.

Between the tsar and the revolutionary intelligentsia stood the imperial bureaucracy, the only organ of the Imperial Russian state for which Pipes has much praise. It contained a number of earnest, genuinely patriotic men who understood the need for reform, and who worked tirelessly for it. Chief among them was Petr Stolypin, Nicholas's principal minister from 1906 to 1911. Unfortunately, he confronted an all but impossible task.

In addition to an uninterested tsar, a hostile imperial court, and an even more hostile intelligentsia, Stolypin and other reformers had to contend with an isolated rural population, which had little interest in the outside world, and no "developed sense of property and law." They were, writes Pipes, "poor material for citizenship" (p. 113). Stolypin believed that "Russia needed a large class of independent, landowning peasants to replace the decaying [Russian nobility] and provide a model for the rest of the rural population" (p. 168). He set out to create such a class, but the peasants' goal was not the individual farms that Stolypin sought to give them. Rather, they wanted the redistribution of land from the state and nobility to their own village communes.

Still less did the peasants desire the dissolution of the established order. This, however, made little difference to the opposition radicals, whose notions of what the people desired was, according to Pipes, "the product of sheer abstraction."[13]

ALTHOUGH Pipes notes that the tsarist regime might have faced revolution under any circumstances, he concludes that "[t]he immediate cause of the Revolution was the collapse of Russia's fragile political and economic structure under the strains of [World War I]" (p. 195). Russia's entry into the war, and especially its defeats, did not unite the country as was the case with some of the other belligerents.[14] Instead, the war divided Russian society even more. "With the first major reverses, in the spring of 1915, as the Germans swept into Poland, Russia exploded with fury—not so much against the invader as against the government." This was, Pipes observes, "the price tsarism had to pay for the semi-patrimonial system of government." Generals, ministers, and bureaucrats were responsible to the tsar alone. Because of this fact, the Duma was able "to accuse the Crown of hopeless incompetence and even worse, treason" (p. 210).

The Romanov government collapsed in February 1917, and was replaced by a Provisional Govern-

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[11]Pipes notes: "The peculiar features of Russian absolutism in its early form, which lasted from the fourteenth until the late eighteenth century, were marked by the virtual absence of the institution of private property, which in the West confronted royal power with effective limits to its authority. In Russia, the very concept of property (in the Roman sense of absolute dominion over objects) was unknown until introduced in the second half of the eighteenth century by the German-born Catherine II. Muscovite Russia had been run like a private estate, its inhabitants and territories, with everything they contained, being treated as the property of the Crown" (p. 54).

Pipes describes the origin and evolution of Russian patrimonialism in his classic *Russia Under the Old Regime*, New York, Scribner's, 1975, which he himself treats as volume one of a projected trilogy, with *The Russian Revolution* being the second installment.

[12]Actually it would have done no such thing. Perhaps this was one of the few times in history when a bit of clever lawyering would have proved highly beneficial.

[13]Pipes, p. 131. This concept, of course, was first articulated by Rousseau as the "general will," "which defined the will of the people as what enlightened 'opinion' declared it to be." Ibid., p. 132.

The intelligentsia, it should be noted, was just as ruthless with its own members. "Inasmuch as the survival of the intelligentsia depended on its members adhering to an ideological consensus, the consensus was ruthlessly enforced." Ibid., p. 140.

All these concepts reached their ultimate fruition with the advent of such Bolshevik notions as the "vanguard party"—a set of people who purported to know better than the actual workers what the true interests of the proletariat were—and "democratic centralism," a principle that purported to combine intraparty freedom of debate with rigid party discipline.

[14]To be sure, the strains of World War I were felt by each of the belligerents in Europe. Social and political tensions were rising, and by the war's end, armed uprisings broke out in several countries, including Germany and Hungary. Still, no European country was torn apart by the war to such an extent as Russia.

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ment, made up largely of moderate social democrats. This constituted "a genuine revolution in that the disorders that brought down the tsarist regime, although not unprovoked or unexpected, erupted spontaneously and the Provisional Government, which succeeded, gained immediate nationwide acceptance" (p. 384). Violence was localized and sporadic. Such was not to be the case after the Bolsheviks seized power eight months later.

In contrast to the events of February, the overthrow of the Provisional Government was not the result of a popular revolution, brought on by the unpopularity of the war or failure of land reform to move fast enough. Rather, that government fell victim to a Bolshevik coup d'état, "a tightly organized conspiracy," and it "took these plotters three years of civil war and indiscriminate terror to subdue the majority of the population." The Bolshevik coup, Pipes argues, "introduced into revolutionary action methods more appropriate to warfare than to politics.[15]

Pipes puts to rest the shopworn myth that the Bolsheviks were forced into a policy of terror by Allied intervention in support of a tsarist counterrevolution. On the contrary, the Bolsheviks were assiduously courted by both the Allies and the Central Powers. Each side hoped to influence Russian policy in its favor, and neither side cared much for the fate of the Russian people.[16] Significantly, the Allied intervention—long used by Soviet supporters in the West to justify both the Red Terror and the USSR's development of a mammoth military machine—when it did take place, was directed not against the Bolsheviks, but against German forces then in Russia. Indeed, initially, the Allied forces were used to protect Russian ports from German occupation, and to "help organize and train the Red Army." Later, when Allied forces landed in northern Russia, they had instructions not to " 'meddle in internal affairs' " (pp. 656–57). As Pipes observes, "[t]he Bolsheviks actively participated in this foreign involvement, and invited it now from this party, now from that, depending on what their momentary interests called for" (p. 669).

Rather, terror was adopted in order to push Russia to the point of no return. The murder of the Tsar and his family—the event in July 1918 that began the Red Terror proper—are symbolic of this. Pipes quotes Trotsky—a man in a position to know—who wrote: "The execution of the Tsar's family was needed not only to frighten, horrify, and instill a sense of hopelessness in the enemy, but also to shake up our own ranks, to show that there was no retreating, that ahead lay either total victory or total doom" (p. 787).

Subsequently, terror was institutionalized because Lenin wanted it that way. By pointing out that it was not Stalin, but the father of the Revolution himself who introduced terror as an instrument of government in the USSR, Pipes dispels another cherished myth of revisionist Sovietology. Lenin, writes Pipes, "was quite prepared to resort to [terror] preventatively—that is, in the absence of active opposition to his rule" (p. 790).

This is not surprising. Seeking to stay in power without popular support, "the dictatorship had first to atomize society and then destroy its very will to act" (p. 838). It is, Pipes concludes, "absurd to talk of the Red Terror as an 'unfortunate' policy 'forced' upon the Bolsheviks by foreign and domestic opponents. As it had been for the Jacobins, terror served the Bolsheviks not as a weapon of last resort, but as a surrogate for the popular support which eluded them" (p. 792).

It is important to underscore the far-reaching nature of the objectives espoused by these revolutionaries. At the very outset of his book, Pipes notes that what the Bolsheviks sought was "a complete redesign of state, society, economy, and culture all over the world for the ultimate purpose of creating a new human being" (p. xxi). The "unconstrained"[17] nature of the Bolshevik vision meant both that a strong resistance was certain to be encountered and that almost any means seemed palatable to the revolutionary zealots, animated by the images of the brave new world they were determined to construct.

Russia's revolutionaries refined terror into a system of government

[15]Pipes, p. 384. While critical of tsarist authoritarianism, the author is equally scornful of the Russian moderates who, at the critical junction in the Revolution's history, failed to muster enough will, cohesion, and fortitude to battle the more determined and ruthless Bolsheviks.

[16]In July 1918, Prime Minister David Lloyd George, writes Pipes, made it clear that "it was none of Britain's business what sort of a government the Russians set up: a republic, a Bolshevik state, or a monarchy" (p. 657). For its part, the German government censored reports of Red atrocities so as not to turn the population against its pro-Bolshevik policy (p. 666). The resolutely and dependably credulous Woodrow Wilson "seems to have believed that the Bolsheviks truly spoke for the Russian people and formed a detachment of the grand international army that he imagined advancing toward universal democracy and eternal peace" (pp. 600–01).

Only Winston Churchill showed much interest in the fate of Russia's millions—it was largely at his initiative that the British ultimately gave some desultory aid to the anti-Bolshevik forces. The effort, writes Pipes, "was never seriously pursued, because the forces of accommodation in the West were stronger than those calling for intervention" (p. 607).

[17]The term is Thomas Sowell's. He uses the terms "unconstrained" and "constrained" visions to describe the two competing philosophical views of how far the state ought to proceed in attempting to perfect human nature through social engineering of one sort or another. See Thomas Sowell, *A Conflict of Visions*, New York, Morrow, 1987.

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in a way that Robespierre could only have fantasized. Indeed, in France, the terror eventually ended, and Robespierre himself went to the scaffold. Russia, however, as Pipes points out, had no "10 Thermidor" (p. 829). Instead, terror was institutionalized as "an intrinsic feature of the regime" (p. 793). And so it remained, at least until Stalin's death in 1953. As a result, the issue of the place of terror in Bolshevik ideology—the extent to which "Stalinism" is the logical successor to "Leninism"—is much less academic than is discussion about the Terror in the French political tradition.[18] Pipes definitively reveals the continuity between the mass graves of Lenin's days and those of the Stalin era. His conclusions are buttressed by the ongoing demise of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: as soon as the scaffolding of repression was removed by Gorbachev, the entire rotten edifice began to collapse.

PIPES's portrayal of "Great October" is much more than an effort to resolve definitively an historical controversy. His account, while not unique, runs counter to much of contemporary Sovietology, as Martin Malia points out in a recent article.[19] Malia notes such features of this "orthodoxy" as the claims that the events of October 1917 were a genuine revolution, caused by the real suffering and alienation of the Russian working class; that the Bolshevik party, at least in its early incarnation, was more or less a democratic force; that certain excesses of the Civil War and beyond were just that—excesses—and that, under different circumstances, the New Economic Policy (NEP) of the 1920's would have become the basis for the entire Soviet economic development. According to this approach, "Leninism, therefore, was not totalitarian, and Stalin was excluded from the authentic canon of Bolshevik history."[20]

Ironically, Malia then proceeds to chastise Pipes for failing even to consider information amassed by the revisionists, for ignoring the "genuine social revolution" against the backdrop of which the Bolshevik coup took place, for utilizing "an oddly idiosyncratic definition of socialism," and for treating the philosophe Helvétius rather than Hegel as the source of what ultimately became the Marxist creed. The crux of Malia's critique is that "underestimating the role of ideology in the Revolution naturally leads [Pipes] [in]to overestimating the Russian tradition in determining its outcome" (loc. cit., pp. 24–25).

All of the above assertions are serious criticisms and ought not to be taken lightly, especially when coming from a Sovietologist of Malia's standing, and one who himself does not subscribe to the revisionist view of Soviet history. Moreover, they are likely to be taken up by the revisionist historians whose sacred cows Pipes has slaughtered. However, in our view, while many of Malia's points are technically correct, they fail to undermine any of Pipes's principal arguments.

To begin with, although Pipes's failure to engage in a spirited debate with the revisionists would be a flaw in a monograph on the evolution of Western historiography of the Russian Revolution, it is less clearly a problem in a straightforward account of the Revolution itself. Second, although Pipes does not dwell on the pent-up social and economic frustrations that provided the backdrop for the October coup, he is certainly aware of what Lenin called "a revolutionary situation." His argument appears to be that the October coup was neither the necessary, nor even the logical, outcome of the February Revolution.[21]

Last, but not least, Malia is correct that Pipes offers no serious discussion of Marxist-Leninist ideology. This supposed failure, however, does not detract from the strength of Pipes's central thesis, that it was the Russian patrimonial tradition and peculiar political culture that provided the fertile soil in which Bolshevism survived for some 75 years.

Moreover, there are enough disagreements among the serious students of Marxism about what constitutes the genuine core of the Marxist tradition—the early Marx with his almost existential pathos about human alienation or the later Marx of *Das Kapital*—and to what degree Leninist thought evolved from the proper Marxist tradition, or corrupted and distorted it—to provide an additional excuse for Pipes's failure to explore the field fully. Suffice it to say that, in our view, Malia's key assertion—that it was the Bolshevik desire to abolish private property that led to their decision to embark on an unprece-

[18]The Soviets themselves, in an effort to salvage some legitimacy for their revolutionary tradition, have searched in vain for some version of a "kinder, gentler" Bolshevism. Likewise, many Western analysts claimed that the early Bolsheviks, or at least some of them, were democratic in thought, if not always in deed. See, e.g., Stephen F. Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution*, New York, Knopf, 1973.

[19]"The Hunt for the True October," *Commentary*, October 1991, pp. 21–28.

[20]Ibid., p. 22. Malia also describes a somewhat "bolder school of revisionism"—associated with Sheila Fitzpatrick and Jerry Hough—which purports to discover certain democratic features even in Stalinism (for example, it generated upward social mobility for workers), and claims that certainly by the time of Brezhnev's ascent to power, the USSR manifested some aspects of "institutional pluralism."

[21]To be sure, were it not for the collapse of the Romanov dynasty and resulting power vacuum, the Bolsheviks would have never been able to seize power. This fact, however, has little relevance in explaining either the nature of the October coup or the subsequent evolution of Bolshevik rule.

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dented experiment in social engineering—is far from self-evident. It is difficult to imagine applying so much energy and passion to the simple task of correcting what appeared to be merely a dry academic contradiction between "productive forces" and the "relationship of production."

THE fact that "the revolutionaries of 1917 consciously looked to 1789 for inspiration has colored much of the interpretation of the French Revolution ever since," according to François Furet.[22] Happily, in *Citizens,* Simon Schama avoids such 20th-century blinkers, and presents a view of the French Revolution as it was, not as it "should have been."

Schama's analysis of the old regime is one of the most striking features of his work. Too often, the *ancien régime* is presented in the literature on the French Revolution as a decayed society, riddled with corruption, privilege, and oppression—arrogant aristocrats and a frivolous queen parade before starving peasants, all of them presided over by a dim, fat, lethargic, monarch utterly unequal to the task of governing France. Even Bourbon sympathizers rarely dwell on Louis XVI's reign, preferring the solar glories of Louis XIV, or the connubial intrigues of Louis XV.

Schama adopts and significantly expands de Tocqueville's argument that the old regime was destabilized by its own efforts at reform. He reveals an earnest regime committed to reasoned reform, and a society, filled with inequities to be sure, but enchanted by the new science and moving toward a system where merit and ability counted for as much, or more, than pedigree and privilege. "Official activism" for the public good was the order of the day under Louis XVI. From basic public hygiene and health measures, to the abolition of torture and the removal of civil disabilities from France's Protestants in 1787, it was the government of Louis XVI, and not the succeeding revolutionary juntas, that led the way (p. 186).

Overall, as Schama points out, the harbingers of the "modern" state—capital and not custom as "the arbiter of social values," "professionals rather than amateurs run[ning] institutions of law and government," and "commerce and industry rather than land" leading economic growth and prosperity—appeared in the last years of the monarchy. They were not the results of the Revolution (ibid.). If anything, the greatest danger to Louis XVI's France was not, Schama explains, resistance to change, but an addiction to it (p. xv).

In the end, he argues, the Bourbons were swept away by a combination of their failure to develop institutions that could effectively carry out their reform program, and, like the Russian monarchy later, by political decisions that taxed the system to the breaking point. In particular, Schama finds the seeds of the monarchy's disaster both in "the destabilizing effects of modernization before the Revolution," and in the program of military reform and naval construction that followed France's humiliation in the Seven Years' War. France's defeat by England and its allies gave birth to a new patriotism, and a determination to avenge the national honor. It was, writes Schama, the expense of maintaining a major continental land force—to preserve the balance of power in Europe—and of maintaining a "transcontinental" navy, "[m]ore than any inequity in a society based on privilege, or the violent cycles of famine that visited France in the 1780's," that occasioned the Revolution (p. 62).

The increase in military spending, which included approximately 1.3 billion livres to promote American independence, resulted in a fiscal crisis. Still, where most historians stress the unwieldy and inequitable nature of the *ancien régime*'s system of taxation, Schama argues:

The trouble lay rather in the political difficulties in sustaining those policy decisions to the point where they might have paid off, and in the repeated retreats of the King to what he judged was the temporarily least painful political alternative. If anything, as de Tocqueville pointed out, it was not an aversion to reform but an obsession with it that made consistent financial management difficult if not impossible. (p. 66).

Louis XVI was a kindly man, and he cared about public opinion. As a result, his ministers avoided forcing through unpopular fiscal reform measures, trying to "avoid anything that suggested arbitrary rule" (p. 66). At the same time, the monarch was unable "to create representative institutions through which the state could execute its program of reform" (p. 857).

The similarities with the final years of the Russian monarchy are striking. Both monarchies were ultimately broken not by the armed insurrections of desperate populations determined to throw off their oppressors but by the results of political decisions that, given a se-

[22]François Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution,* trans. by Elborg Forster, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 86.

Furet observes that after 1917, "the French Revolution became more than just the matrix of probabilities that could and would engender another permanently liberating revolution . . . . It had become the mother of an actual event, and its offspring had a name: October 1917, and more generally, the Russian Revolution. As early as 1920, Mathiez wrote a pamphlet stressing the kinship between the government of the Montagnards from June 1793 to July 1794 and the Bolshevik dictatorship during the civil war years." Ibid., p. 85.

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ries of external events, proved disastrous.

For Russia, it was involvement in, first, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05, and then the Great War itself, which stretched its human and physical resources past the breaking point and led to the Tsar's fall. Ironically, at that point, the many good reforms of the prior years proved more of a curse than a blessing. The rapid industrialization at the turn of the century, accompanied by political, economic, juridical, and social reforms, had greatly weakened the fabric of the old order, particularly the autocracy. Yet, not enough time had passed for the new, more democratic institutions to take root.

UNLIKE many contemporary scholars, Schama refuses to dismiss or downplay the excesses of the French Revolution, a process he calls the "scholarly normalization of evil" (p. 631). Rather, he portrays the Revolution as it was—a creature of violence. Bloodshed, Schama concludes, "was not the unfortunate byproduct of revolution, it was the source of its energy" (p. 615), and the revolutionaries reveled in it.

Accordingly, the original Reign of Terror is not buried in the middle of Schama's account, dismissed with a few paragraphs of embarrassed text between accounts of the monarchy's fall and the Directory's rise, but serves as its grand finale. He describes in detail the sickening slaughter of the King's Swiss Guard on August 10, 1792; the "September Massacres"—where thousands of prisoners, many of them adolescent boys, and most not aristocrats at all, were sabred and shot; and the organized terror of Robespierre and the Committee of Public Safety that followed. As Schama writes,

a good case might be made for seeing the September Massacres as the event which more than almost any other exposed a central truth of the French Revolution: its dependence on organized killing to accomplish political ends. For however virtuous the principles of kingless France were supposed to be, their power to command allegiance depended, from the very beginning, on the spectacle of death. (p. 637)

Like Pipes, Schama will have none of the argument that national danger from foreign intervention (here, counterrevolutionary forces) are to blame for the descent of the revolution into terror. Like the Bolsheviks, the Jacobins readily embraced terror as a calculated policy to achieve their own messianic political, social, and ideological ends. They were determined to inculcate virtue, as they understood it, into their fellow citizens. The society was to be mobilized in service to the *patrie,* with the common good completely subsuming any consideration of individual liberty or autonomy.

In Schama's analysis, the Revolution moved toward radicalism both from frustrated popular expectations and individual political ambition and rhetoric. As Schama points out, between 1789 and 1793, France experienced an "unprecedented explosion of politics." Subjects became citizens, and were promised by a string of revolutionary orators that this transformation would resolve all of the nation's problems. The new citizens could now demand what before they could only request—"justice, freedom, and plenty." "By the same token," Schama writes, "should [these values] not materialize, only those who had spurned their citizenship, or who were by their birth or unrepentant beliefs incapable of exercising it, could be held responsible" (p. 859).

In seeking the cause for the descent into terror and the actual massacre of thousands of individuals, most of them entirely innocent, Schama, for one, posits that perhaps it was Romanticism,

[w]ith its addiction to the Absolute and the Ideal; its fondness for the vertiginous and the macabre; its concept of political energy as, above all, electrical; its obsession with the heart; its preference for passion over reason, for virtue over peace, that supplied a crucial ingredient in the mentality of the revolutionary elite: its association of liberty with wildness. (p. 861)

In any case, the Revolution's radicalization was not an inescapable result of the deluge writ indelibly in the book of fate, but the result of an intellectual conceit.[23]

More than anything else, it was this adoption of widespread and organized violence as an acceptable means to effect political and social change that constituted the legacy of the French Revolution. This legacy was eagerly embraced by the Bolsheviks a century and a quarter later.

IN stark contrast to the events of 1789 and 1917, the English Revolution of 1688 was accomplished with so little bloodshed and social dislocation that many have questioned whether it should be classed as a "revolution" at all. Marxist historians, in particular, tend to dismiss 1688 as a palace coup, where one branch of the royal family replaced

[23]Although the French revolutionaries claimed to worship Reason—festivals of Reason were held in many places to replace Christian observances, and Notre Dame de Paris was renamed the Temple of Reason—Schama points out they were also imbued with the new romanticism. "Those two tempers—rhetorical and rational, visceral and cerebral, sentimental and brutal—shall not be separated in this history. Indeed, it was from their imperfect union that a new politics was born" (p. 17).

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another, but which did not much effect the country's political, economic, or social development.[24]

Ironically, this interpretation of the events of 1688 is not very different from the traditional "Whig interpretation" of the Glorious Revolution, which has informed British and American political theory over the past three centuries. The most eloquent statement of the Whig interpretation was made by Lord Macaulay in his monumental *History of England from the Accession of James II,* originally published in the mid-19th century. According to Macaulay and his apostles, 1688 represented not so much a revolution—the French experience had, of course, given "revolution" a thoroughly bad name in Victorian England—as a restoration of the ancient English "constitution."[25] That constitution, they argued, was rescued from a tyrannical king, James II, who had been bent upon imposing an absolute and arbitrary government on the country. Under this view, James had acted illegally in using "prerogative" powers to promote Catholics in the government who would be entirely dependent upon him and subservient to his will. For Macaulay, 1688 merely represented the removal of a bad king, not the restructuring of the office of the British monarchy itself. He concluded that " 'not a single flower of the Crown was touched; not a single new right was given to the people' " (Speck, p. 1).

As Speck ably demonstrates in his *Reluctant Revolutionaries,* neither the Marxist nor the Whig interpretation does justice to the events of 1688. Drawing upon the work of a number of recent historians, most particularly that of J. R. Western and J. R. Jones, he articulates a more credible explanation of 1688—that England did experience a revolution in 1688–89.[26] The restored monarchy under Charles II (1660–85) and his brother James II (1685–88) had aspired to a kind of "absolutism" (even if it was a bit threadbare when compared with the absolutism of their cousin Louis XIV in France) based upon a legal exercise of the Crown's still vast prerogative powers. In 1688, Speck concludes, this absolutism gave way decisively to limited monarchy.

The chain of events leading to the English Revolution may be stated briefly. The monarchy was restored in 1660, after England's only experiment with republicanism had ended in Oliver Cromwell's military dictatorship. The restored King Charles II had spent more than a decade in exile. His overriding goals were to avoid—as he put it—going "on his travels" again, to preserve the principle of hereditary monarchy, and to extend its authority wherever possible.

Charles II was not the autocratic and shifty hedonist of legend, but he never let principle interfere with any of these aims. In the last few years of his reign, he managed to impose a kind of absolutist government in England, based upon a growing royal revenue, occasional subsidies from Louis XIV, and a firm alliance with the conservative Anglican majority among the English gentry.

Charles was succeeded by his brother James in 1685. Although not the arbitrary tyrant of Whig legend, James II lacked his brother's personal flexibility and highly developed instinct for political survival. He was a Catholic convert, and his principal ambition upon coming to the throne was to restore the political and civil rights of his co-religionists. He set about this task with a single-minded ardor that, in the space of three years, alienated many of the conservative Anglicans who had been his brother's strongest supporters.

[24]For them, the critical period in the formulation of the modern English state was the Civil War of the 1640's and its aftermath. In that "Great Rebellion" they find enough radical ideology and violence to make a respectable revolution, albeit a "bourgeois" one. In this view, 1688 was merely an assertion of power by the new ruling class, deposing a king who was trying to turn back the clock. With the "coup d'état of 1688–89 and the peaceful Hanoverian succession," writes Christopher Hill, "[t]he self-confident landed class had now consciously taken its destiny into its own hands." Loc. cit., p. 118.

The events of 1688, however, did not fit the normal coup model. They were not orchestrated by a determined conspiracy, seizing the machinery of state. The "conspirators" who invited William III to England did little more than inform him that public opinion would likely support his intervention. They did not make the revolution. The revolution was made by William III's army, and by James II's failure of nerve. Once James had fled the country, William III did not step into his shoes. He waited and watched while a national Convention determined where to vest the Crown, and what limitations to place upon it.

Overall, the Glorious Revolution was a political revolution that ended the English Crown's move toward absolutism, and replaced it with a constitutional monarchy. Interestingly, contemporaries had no doubt that the events of 1688–89 were revolutionary, and Professor Speck rightly takes them at their word.

[25]England certainly does have a constitution, although instead of being reflected in a single document, like the American constitution, it consists of scores of different documents and court cases. British jurists would have no more trouble than their American counterparts in determining whether a given governmental act is constitutional.

[26]Speck is also of the opinion that 1688, if not classifiable as a social revolution itself, certainly ushered in a social revolution. The Revolution of 1688 was made by the English gentry—largely by supporting, or not opposing, the invasion of William III and the ultimate deposition of King James. William's government, however, "encouraged the development of other interests literally at the expense of the landed interest. Above all the creation of a machinery of public credit benefited the monied interest and hit landowners where it hurt, in the pocket" (pp. 250–51).

These changes did not mean a social revolution in the classic sense, but "they did mark an acceptance that emergent interests which had received a powerful boost from the commercial boom of the 1680's should be granted greater political clout. In this respect, 1688 deserves to be regarded as marking a shift in the process whereby England became recognized not as an *ancien régime* but as a nation of shopkeepers" (p. 251).

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This element was, however, willing to tolerate the aging King's promotion of fellow Catholics since his heir presumptive was a firm Protestant—James's eldest daughter Mary, wife of Prince William of Orange. Moreover, the alternative seemed a return to civil war. In July 1688, however, James's queen gave birth to a son, and England was faced with the prospect of a continuing Catholic dynasty.

Shortly after the child's birth, a number of influential figures invited William of Orange to bring an army to England, ostensibly to ensure a "free" parliament, at which James's policies would be reversed, and the parentage of his son examined. When William did, in fact, invade in November 1688, James lost his nerve and fled to France. A Convention Parliament met in early 1689, and decided, after much debate, that James had effectively abdicated his throne by fleeing the country. The crown then was offered to William and his wife Mary, who were proclaimed king and queen.

The crown they accepted, however, was a different one than that allegedly abandoned by King James. Speck rejects the classic Whig case, and Macaulay's formulation, noting that "[s]o far from the Revolution Settlement leaving all the flowers of the Crown untouched . . . it uprooted some significant blooms" (p. 162). To begin with, Speck argues, there was nothing illegal about most of the measures Charles II and James II adopted to maximize the royal prerogative.[27] Moreover, the Stuart bid for absolutism was not doomed to failure—there was nothing inevitable about 1688. Indeed, had the alliance between the Crown and the established Anglican Church—which included a majority of the political nation—been preserved by James II, the later Stuarts "bade fair to make the monarchy as absolute in the 1680's as it had ever been since the accession of their House to the English throne" (p. 243).

The Revolution of 1688, and the Revolution Settlement that followed, put a decisive end to this absolutism. While little appeared to have changed on the surface, the substance of the monarchy would never be the same. "What triumphed in the Revolution Settlement," writes Speck, "was a version of the rule of law which saw the king as beneath and not above it." James II had sworn at his coronation to keep the laws "granted" by the kings of England. William and Mary swore to govern "according to the statutes in parliament agreed on, and the laws and customs of the same" (p. 165). After 1688, no British monarch again attempted to govern without parliament, and it was, observes Speck, this "permanence of parliament" that "distinguished the limited monarchy which the Revolution established from the absolutism to which the Stuarts had aspired" (p. 246).

The most distinctive feature of the Glorious Revolution was the absence of bloodshed once the revolutionaries had seized power,[28] a result that was by no means inevitable given the extensive bloodletting in 17th-century England and elsewhere.[29] The participants made every effort to avoid violence, from William III's orchestration of James II's escape to France, to the great care taken in the Convention Parliament to reach a formula for James's *deposition*—"*abdication*"—that was acceptable to most of the king's supporters. The explanation for this lies in the general agreement among " 'Whigs, Tories, princes, prelates, nobles, clergy, common people, and a standing army' " about what had to be done (p. 240).

In short, no reign of terror followed the Glorious Revolution, because the goals of the revolutionaries corresponded to those of most of the political nation. With few exceptions, they had no radical ideological or social agenda to impose on their fellow citizens. Most were, as Speck's title indicates, "reluctant revolutionaries," whose ambitions were fairly modest—to reverse the "Catholicizing" policies of James II, and to limit his authority, rather than to rewrite the constitution, or to remake society.[30]

Whatever they thought of James II—and most men of affairs were very uncomfortable at his deposition—Englishmen almost universally agreed that the king had abused his authority, and that he needed to be controlled. They also agreed that a renewed civil war had to be avoided at all costs.[31] Most welcomed William of Orange with resignation rather than relish. They ulti-

[27]In the late 17th century, the prerogative of the English king was still formidable, even given the limits accepted at the Restoration—the abolition of the "prerogative courts" of Star Chamber and High Commission, and the acceptance of the principle that taxation could only be imposed through parliamentary grant.

[28]Irish and Scottish historians rightly point out that although the revolution was bloodless in England, in Ireland and Scotland it led to civil war. Moreover, there were also civil disorders in the American colonies in 1689–90, most notably in New England, New York, and Maryland. These events, however, were more a part of the final absorption of the Celtic fringe into the English state than incidents of revolutionary violence calculated to shore up the new order.

The revolution resolved the issue of parliamentary government in England. The issue of whether Ireland, Scotland, and the English Colonies were tied to England only through the person of the monarch, or whether they were an integral part of the English state, subject to the English Parliament, was not settled in the revolution but in its aftermath.

[29]For example, the punishment for "treason" was the brutal process of being hanged, drawn, and quartered.

[30]As Speck notes, the few who actually did mean to depose James and replace him with William "succeeded beyond their wildest dreams," because James fled, leaving his supporters with little to support (p. 239).

[31](Fn. 31 follows on p. 134.)

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mately accepted his accession to the throne as a necessity, but few thought it was a virtue (p. 239). The handful of radicals—and there were still those who looked back to the Commonwealth regime with nostalgia—were in no position to have much of a say.

Thus, the "Glorious Revolution" was bloodless, in a sense, as a matter of choice, as the French and Russian Revolutions were bloody by design. Here, the revolutionaries carried not a message of messianic fury, but articulated a broad consensus with which most of the country agreed—and which the revolutionaries were careful to preserve.

THE final chapter of the Russian Revolution and the revolutions of 1989 in Eastern Europe seem largely to have followed the example of 1688, rather than those of 1789 and October 1917. The people of Russia have resoundingly renounced the legacy of Lenin, and they did so peacefully. Communism has discredited itself so profoundly that it is difficult to conceive of how it might rise again.[32]

Of course, only time will tell what this dramatic shift will ultimately bring and whether the largely "negative" (anticommunist) consensus will peacefully convert into a more "positive," forward-looking consensus. If the experience of the past teaches us anything, it is that reverses are possible. Both the French and Russian Revolutions started with the best of intentions and the highest of hopes. It is perfectly possible that the consensus that defeated the August coup could break down. If it does, Russia may well experience a new "time of troubles"—a "*smutnoye vremya*." However, the Russian people seem set against it. It may well be that, at last, the lights Sir Edward Grey saw extinguished in August 1914 are being lit once again.

[31]Unlike the romantic idealists of 1789, who grew up in a France that had not known widespread civil discord for over a century, the men who made the Revolution of 1688 were only one generation removed from the reality of civil war, and many men survived who had lived through it. They harbored no romantic illusions about the patriotic death, or the cleansing nature of violence. They feared it, and distrusted the "enthusiasts" who would have urged such a course.

[32]Indeed, one can argue that the reason why the current events in the USSR have unfolded without much bloodshed is because the "old regime" was not only unjust, but was also a total failure. And to argue, after the Soviet, Chinese, Cuban, North Korean, Vietnamese, and East European experiences, that a better version of communism can be built defies common sense. Ironically, neither the tsar's regime, nor that of the Bourbons, was entirely decayed at the time of its downfall. Communism had rotted clean through.

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Nationalism and Baltic Independence

Richard J. Krickus

WALTER CLEMENS. *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire.* New York, St. Martin's Press, 1991.

JAN A. TRAPANS. Ed. *Toward Independence: The Baltic Popular Movements.* Boulder, CO, Westview, 1991.

ALFRED E. SENN. *Lithuania Awakening.* Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1990.

MICHAEL MANDELBAUM, Ed. *The Rise of Nations in the Soviet Union: American Foreign Policy and the Disintegration of the USSR.* New York, Council on Foreign Relations, 1991.

THE two intellectual traditions that have dominated 20th-century Western political thought—liberalism and Marxism—have notable difficulty in coming to grips with ethnicity and national consciousness. Both posit that ethnic values and affiliations, and the nationalistic impulses they often ignite, would expire in modern society. Indeed, it would not be an overstatement to say that Marxism and Western liberalism display palpable animosity toward ethnicity.

Walker Connor has contended that there are many Marxist interpretations of nationalism, but all maintain the belief that in a socialist commonwealth, "parochial," "nationalistic" impulses will be superseded by universalistic norms.[1] For its part, mainstream Western liberalism deems economics to be pivotal—that is, it asserts that in the crucible of the market place, "economic man" will replace "ethnic man."

Note that in both cases there is a normative component to the final assessment of nationalism—that insofar as it persists in the modern world, it is "bad." From the classical Marxist perspective, nationalism is false consciousness because it precludes workers from gaining a true proletarian consciousness. In the Western liberal view, nationalism is pernicious because it is considered the root cause of intergroup conflict and ultimately bloody wars between nations.

Given the global influence of both intellectual traditions, even seemingly benign interpretations of nationalism today are freighted with negative connotations. Nationalism often is described as being "premodern," and a remnant of "traditional society." It remains common practice for policy-makers and writers on politics to use the word nationalism in a pejorative fashion.

But in the Baltic republics, nationalism has been a positive force. For example, a comparison of the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania* from the 1970's and 1980's with Russian *samizdat* documents from the same period reveals that in contrast to the activities of the Russian dissident movement, which was led and supported almost exclusively by intellectuals, the Lithuanian-Catholic human rights movement included people from all walks of life. Those who wrote, read, and distributed the *Chronicle* were urban and rural folk, young and old, educated and poor-

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[1]Walker Connor, *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy,* Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1984.

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ly schooled men and women. The fact that tens of thousands of people signed petitions protesting religious oppression in Lithuania, during a period when even such modest acts of protest left petitioners subject to arrest, suggested the movement had a mass base. The "ideology" motivating these people was nationalism expressed in their attachment to the Lithuanian language and a desire to preserve Lithuanian culture.

This article will focus on nationalism in the Baltic states in an effort to address three questions:

- Why were the Baltic peoples the first in the Soviet Union to produce popular-front movements?
- Why was Lithuania the first republic to bolt from the Union?
- What does the future hold for newly independent Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania?

This essay will explore these questions through an assessment of the four books under review, which were written and edited by people who are extremely knowledgeable about the Baltic republics and Soviet nationalities policy. Given the rapid pace and the magnitude of change, however, many of the issues treated in these volumes—such as speculation about the future of the independence movements and US policy toward them—have been overtaken by events. Nonetheless, the books provide insights into all of the questions under scrutiny in this essay.

Walter Clemens Jr.'s *Baltic Independence and Russian Empire* and Jan A. Trapans's edited volume *Toward Independence: The Baltic Popular Movements* explain why popular fronts first appeared in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. They do not ignore factors that American and Soviet commentators have emphasized—the impact of a federal system whose constituent elements are national territories, the center's economic modernization efforts in the republics, and the capture of the party and state apparatuses at the republic level and below by members of the respective titular nationalities. However, they also stress traditional historical and cultural factors that have produced a strong sense of nationhood among the Baltic peoples.

Alfred E. Senn's *Lithuania Awakening* is a detailed, first-rate account, based mainly on the author's on-the-scene observations, of the origins of the "Lithuanian Reconstruction Movement" (*Lietuvos Persitvarkymo Sąjūdis*). It covers developments from August 1988 to *Sąjūdis*'s founding congress in October 1989. (The author added a brief afterward that discusses the March 1989 elections to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies and the subsequent alliance between Lithuanian Communist party leader Algirdas Brazauskas and *Sąjūdis*.) This work is by far the most comprehensive treatment available of the events and personalities that played a pivotal role in *Sąjūdis*'s formation.

Finally, the contributors to *The Rise of Nations in the Soviet Union,* through analysis of history and contemporary events, link the nationalities issue to the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Moreover, they speculate about the international implications of this monumental event, especially those pertaining to the United States. Here again, recent developments have overtaken many of the issues so adroitly treated by the authors in this brief book.

DISCUSSION of nationalities issues in mainstream Soviet studies circles in the United States has long been muted. Even as late as 1985, Stephen F. Cohen's *Rethinking the Soviet Experience,* which aimed to take stock of "Soviet studies," ignored the nationalities question altogether.[2] Scholars who studied the USSR's "ethnic minorities" were deemed eccentric, and their work was largely ignored. Furthermore, their assertions that the non-Russians were restive were suspect since many of them were émigrés from the Soviet Union who harbored bitter memories of their homeland.

A review of the literature suggests another reason for the neglect of the non-Russians. There was empirical evidence that the Soviet nationalities policy—Russification—was making great strides in homogenizing the "Soviet peoples." Scholars cited a correlation between urbanization and industrialization on the one hand, and preference for the Russian language and hence their acceptance of a Soviet identity on the other.[3] It was conceded that such developments were most evident among the educated elements of the non-Russian nations, but expanded educational opportunities suggested that Russification was making inroads among workers and peasants as well.

Neglect of the more than 100 non-Russian nations resulted in an anomaly; for years, Soviet studies was really Russian studies—the study of Russian language, Russian culture, Russian politics, etc. And this myopia was not only limited to academic circles; policymakers also perceived developments in the USSR from this Russo-centric perspective. More-

[2]Stephen F. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1985.

[3]Brian Silver, "Social Mobilization and the Russification of Soviet Nationalities," *American Political Science Review* (Washington, DC), March 1974, pp. 45–66.

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over, and contrary to Paul Hollander's recent claim that the failure to anticipate the USSR's demise was a peculiar liberal disorder, conservatives were equally as guilty of exaggerating the Soviet-Russian empire's prowess while ignoring the systemic internal crises—*including the empire's nationality problems*—that would eventually destroy it.[4] For example, in the late 1970's, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger warned that the Soviets, having reached nuclear parity with the United States, were now in a position to use a diplomacy of terror to force the "Finlandization of Western Europe." Moreover, Western conservatives responded favorably to Jean-François Revel's inference that liberal democracies were inherently weak and doomed to be crushed by totalitarian systems, which were intrinsically strong.[5]

It is possible that Western assessments of the success of Russification helped convince the Soviet elite that they were making progress on the nationalities front. Mikhail Gorbachev, a political visionary on other issues, remained a captive of Marxist-Leninist dogma about the origins of nationalism among the non-Russian peoples and displayed confusion about their mounting discontent with the center's Russification policies. He attributed the emergence of ethnic strife in Central Asia and the Caucasus and the rise of separatist movements in the Baltic republics to economic stagnation. It is no wonder that he was blindsided by Lithuania's March 11, 1990, declaration of independence. Gorbachev's brutal suppression of the Lithuanian action, which was led by the courageous and stubborn Vilnius University musicologist Vytautas Landsbergis, was based on a solid assessment that separatist drives placed the Soviet-Russian empire at risk. On this score, his judgment was flawless.

IN contrast to other Soviet peoples, the Balts possessed a major asset—their historical memory of the interwar years, when Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were independent. In the late 1980's, massive demonstrations, often involving hundreds of thousands of people, were conducted to commemorate the historical developments that ended the Baltic nations' independent existence—the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the 1940 deportations to Siberia, and the return of the Red Army in 1944.

Reform communists and nonparty members also were quick to exploit *glasnost'* to protest policies that placed Latvian and Estonian national life at risk. The fears of Estonians and Latvians about national survival were linked to the massive in-migration of Russians, who staffed the new industries constructed in each republic after World War II. The failure of Russian settlers to learn indigenous languages exacerbated fears about Russian cultural hegemony. Toomas H. Ilves relates that in Estonia, 24 percent of the Russians there "understand but do not speak" Estonian, while 35 percent know no Estonian all (in Trapans, ed., p. 77). Clemens notes that leaders of the Communist Party of Estonia, even after long residence in that republic, did not bother to learn the local language. For example, Pavel Panfilov, the second secretary of the Tallinn party organization, lived in Estonia for 21 years but spoke no Estonian. "It was simply not necessary for us to learn Estonian when I came," he said. "Even now, about 68 percent of communists in the Tallinn organization are Russian-speakers" (p. 151).

The ineptness of the republic Communist leaders, who remained loyal to the CPSU but resisted Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms, was another asset of the popular fronts. Also, as pointed out by V. Stanley Vardys, the support of such Lithuanian Communist reformers as Algirdas Brazauskas contributed to the success of *Sąjūdis* (in Trapans, ed., pp. 11–25). Brazauskas's opposition to the hard-liners in his own party won the hearts of many Lithuanians even before he opted to work for his republic's independence. Gorbachev reasoned that Brazauskas's popularity could be exploited to coopt the burgeoning independence movement, but Brazauskas was at the helm when the Communist Party of Lithuania broke with the CPSU in December 1989, and he supported the restoration of independence the following March. Kestutis Girnius observes that Moscow similarly miscalculated when it relied on the reform-minded Jānis Vāgris, who replaced Boris Pugo as the Latvian party chief, to placate the separatists in Latvia.

Gorbachev's efforts to place reform communists in power in the republics proved futile. They were simply another piece of evidence indicating his tardiness in dealing with the Baltic separatist movements. According to Girnius:

The appointments of Vāgris in Latvia and Brazauskas in Lithuania illustrate Gorbachev's dilemma once the genie of national rebirth had been released. The local party

[4]Paul Hollander, "Communism and Its Discontents," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), May-June 1991, pp. 116–23.

[5]Jean François Revel, *The Totalitarian Temptation*, New York, Doubleday, 1977.

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organization could retain influence only if its leadership hewed closely to the public mood. This required adopting an ever more independent course of action, leading to a proportionate decline in Moscow's influence. (in Trapans, ed., p. 68)

Jan A. Trapans and Walter Clemens agree that economic discontent in the Baltic area clearly inflamed hostility toward the center, but they argue that Gorbachev's assertion that economic stagnation alone fueled the Baltic independence drive was a gross misinterpretation of events as well as a political blunder. In addition to discussing the non-economic grievances already mentioned by the authors, they assert that concern about ecological devastation was a powerful issue that mobilized people from all walks of life. Moreover, they point out that nationalities were not inclined to divorce the environmental destruction of their homeland from anger over Russian hegemony. Estonians and Latvians could not forget that the large industrial enterprises, which are responsible for most of the pollution in their countries, were built and staffed primarily by Russians, who were perceived as colonizers, not settlers. Russians became the enemy, even though the ordinary Russian worker migrated to the region because he wanted a decent job, a higher living standard for his family, and a brighter future for his children.[6]

Although the essays in Trapans's *Toward Independence* were completed late in 1989, they provide scholars with thoughtful, extensively researched, and tightly argued discussions of the forces that ultimately led to Baltic independence. Clemens's book also provides helpful historical information (with special attention to developments in Estonia) that makes it accessible to general readers who do not have an extensive background in the subject.

IN his book on the origins of *Sąjūdis*, Alfred E. Senn makes clear that by the early 1980's, growing numbers of men and women in the Lithuanian establishment, including party-members and intellectuals, feared that their language, culture, and homeland were at risk. Writers and teachers voiced concern that in the face of the center's Russification policies, the Lithuanian language would slowly die. Educators and historians resented teaching children and publishing material that distorted Lithuanian history. College students organized themselves to save the nation's historical monuments and other treasures. And just about all Lithuanians were appalled at the ecological destruction the Soviets had visited upon their beloved *Tėvynė* (homeland). After the Chernobyl' meltdown, ecological concerns exploded into open protest when planned additions to the nuclear power plant at Ignalina were announced. Everyone was mindful of the fact that this nuclear power installation is located in an area (Sniečkus) that is inhabited mainly by Russians. As in Latvia and Estonia, many Lithuanians inextricably linked environmental destruction to Russian hegemony.

Senn briefly discusses, perhaps too briefly for general readers, some of the people and groups who made up the Lithuanian opposition before the rise of *Sąjūdis* in the late 1980's. In this category are such Catholic human-rights activists as Nijole Sadunaitė, and such longtime opponents of Soviet rule as Viktoras Petkus and Antanas Terleckas, founders of the "Lithuanian Freedom League," which attracted militants bent on Lithuania's independence. Although their protests in 1987 and 1988 were later overshadowed by *Sąjūdis*, which they incorrectly deemed a creature of the Communist party even after it demonstrated that it was operating independently of Moscow and on behalf of Lithuanian independence, these militants sustained covert resistance to the Soviet occupation long before Lithuania's intellectuals and reform communists began their challenge to Soviet hegemony, and they were the first to demonstrate to the Lithuanian people that the *apparatchiki* were demoralized and uncertain of their ability to crush dissent.

Gorbachev's reforms and actions, including the release of Andrey Sakharov from exile in Gorky, were especially shocking to Lithuanian hard-liners, as was Moscow's encouragement of the popular-front movement in Estonia. Perhaps most disquieting, however, was the August 1988 visit to Vilnius of Aleksandr Yakovlev, then Gorbachev's right-hand man and the founding father of *perestroyka*. He told the Lithuanian party leader Ringaudas Songaila that the party's hostility toward displays of national consciousness was a grave political error. To underscore the hypocrisy of many "internationalists" who denigrated the "nationalists," Yakovlev cited the confrontation between Nikolay Mitkin, the Russian second secretary of the republic's Communist party, and the Lithuanian writer Vytautas Petkevičius, in which the former accused the latter of national parochialism. Petkevičius responded, "Isn't it a paradox? I know three languages, and am a nationalist. And he who calls me that knows one—Russian—even though he has lived in the republic for more than a decade. But he is an internationalist!" (cited in Senn, p. 111).

[6]Such ordinary Russians, and not the managers, party *apparatchiki*, and representatives from the security agencies, supported the Baltic independence movements in sizable numbers.

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Reformers in the party and the intellectual community proceeded with caution until Songaila rejected Gorbachev's recommendation in the spring of 1988 that delegates to the 19th CPSU Conference seek popular approval. Senn indicates that it was this offense coupled with the other grievances previously mentioned that finally induced the academics at Vilnius University to form an "Initiative Group" in June 1988. Among the original founders of *Sąjūdis* were many leading Communists, such as Bronius Genzelis, Antanas Buračas, Romualdas Ozolas, and Kazimiera Prunskienė. But they were joined by others who had spurned party membership, for example, Landsbergis, whose family had played a vital role in the Lithuanian national revival in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and whose wife, Grazina, had been a Siberian deportee.

One of the more useful parts of Senn's book is devoted to a discussion of the assistance provided to *Sąjūdis* by Western radio broadcasting. For example, plans for a demonstration in Sniečkus, the site of the controversial Ignalina nuclear power plant, were placed in jeopardy when the authorities in this predominantly Russian city refused to permit it. *Sąjūdis* decided to go ahead with the demonstration, and the question turned to how this decision would be communicated to the Lithuanian people. Senn writes:

When someone in the audience asked how the group could possibly learn of the final plans with only three days intervening before the action, another voice shouted out "Sakadolskis will tell us!" The suggestion drew laughter, but [Zigmas] Vaisvila was in fact to use this alternative. Romas Sakadolskis, as the Lithuanian voice of the Voice of America, had his own place in the ferment in Lithuania. Conservatives, reformers, and radicals alike listened to his broadcasts and quoted him to make their points in discussions. (p. 172)

In light of Senn's treatment of the impact of Western radio broadcasting on developments in Lithuania, it is surprising that he chose not to devote more attention to such Western organizations as the Lithuanian Information Center, which played a critical role in assisting the Lithuanian independence movement. The center established a press office for *Sąjūdis* in Vilnius, and later its small staff planned and helped advance trips to the West by Prunskienė and Landsbergis, and provided translators for them in meetings with President George Bush and members of the US Congress. Moreover, there were many young Americans and Canadians of Lithuanian descent residing in Lithuania in the late 1980's, and they helped *Sąjūdis*, and later the new government, present Lithuania's case to the world.[7]

SĄJŪDIS and the popular fronts in Latvia and Estonia were successful in achieving independence for their countries. What, though, of the future? Putting aside the daunting and widely discussed economic problems facing the Baltic peoples, there are other problems that will hamper their efforts to build political, economic, and societal pluralism. As Alexander Motyl states in his excellent essay in the Mandelbaum volume, "The post-Soviet republics will have to confront the disastrous legacy of decades of communism, and they will have to do so without the benefit of strong civil societies, stable political institutions, and experienced elites" (p. 51). In the Soviet era, opposition to Russian imperialism fostered unity among the Baltic peoples and muted divisions within all three societies. After independence, these latent fissures, such as ethnic conflict, will become manifest.

The albatross of "Homo Sovieticus" will be the most difficult communist legacy to cope with. For 50 years, the Baltic peoples have been forced overtly, and by dint of circumstances, to adopt authoritarian patterns of thought and behavior that will not quickly expire in the postcommunist environment. It will be some time before popular legitimacy is accorded to free and open dialogue, toleration of opposing views, acquisition of social rewards through merit, not connections, and other building blocks of a democratic political culture.

In his introduction to *The Rise of Nations in the Soviet Union,* Michael Mandelbaum, among other things, warns that the communist legacy will exacerbate ethnic discord. The warning is certainly relevant to the Baltic area, where minority nations make up 46 percent of Latvia's population, 35 percent of Estonia's, and 20 percent of Lithuania's (Mandelbaum, ed., p. 103). Indeed, one litmus test of the maturity of Baltic nationalisms will be the treatment afforded the Russians, Poles, Belorussians, and other minorities who reside in all three republics. The Baltic leaders understand this, and the minority laws on the books in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania reflect their progressive position.[8] But economic and nationalities policies were often entangled in the Soviet era, and it will be difficult to untangle them in the post-Soviet period. For example, the large industrial enterprises built in the Baltic republics

[7]North Americans of Latvian and Estonian descent played an equally important role in Riga and Tallinn, respectively, in attracting the attention of Western media.

[8]In this connection, see Riina Kionka, "Are The Baltic Laws Discriminatory?" Radio Liberty, *Report on the USSR* (Munich), Apr. 12, 1991, p. 22.

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after World War II are among the most inefficient economic entities in all three countries; they will have difficulty competing in a market economy and will be priority targets for dismemberment. As I have noted above, however, Russian workers are found in disproportionate numbers in these enterprises; when they lose their jobs, they will likely perceive their unemployment as a consequence of anti-Russian policies, not the result of market logic.

The cool words recently exchanged between Poland's Lech Wałęsa and Lithuania's Vytautas Landsbergis are another example of the ethnic discord that may continue to be a source of internal unrest and a barrier to harmonious relations among former members of the Soviet-Russian "outer" and "inner" empires. The Wałęsa-Landsbergis dispute arose following a decision of the Lithuanian government to dissolve the councils in the predominantly Polish districts of eastern Lithuania on the grounds that the Polish party *apparatchiki* who dominated them had supported the August 1991 putsch. Leaders of ethnic Poles in Lithuania, such as Supreme Council Deputy Czesław Okińczyc, a strong supporter of Lithuania's independence, responded that Vilnius had no constitutional authority to disband the councils.[9] The Polish government in Warsaw rushed to the defense of the Polish minority in Lithuania. Up to that point, Warsaw and Vilnius had enjoyed warm relations, and the dispute will probably be resolved without lasting damage to those relations. Nonetheless, the incident should be a prod for the Lithuanian government, which to be sure faces enormous difficulties of all kinds, to address its ethnic minority problem with dispatch. At the same time, Poland's leaders must understand that Vilnius is wary of outside interference in its internal affairs by a country ten times larger than Lithuania.

Meanwhile, in Latvia and Estonia, where demographics justify fears about national extinction, attempts to strengthen the indigenous languages and cultures in the post-Soviet period, and the hostile rhetoric of some Estonian and Latvian nationalists, will be perceived by Russians and other minorities as evidence of the violation of their human rights. It will not be an easy task for governments in Riga and Tallinn to convince their ethnic minorities of their goodwill. As disputes over bilingualism and the rights of ethnic minorities throughout the world indicate, there are no easy and ready solutions to the concerns of both sides, even if the government adopts sensitive and progressive policies toward minority peoples.

INASMUCH as the problems faced by the now-independent Baltic peoples are daunting, Motyl argues that aid from the Western democracies is necessary to help them grapple with their problems. His recommendations have not been overtaken by the recent events in the USSR:

- integrating the republics in as many international organizations as possible to provide them with stable structures and values for dealing with their problems;
- encouraging, if not compelling, all the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet West to declare themselves nuclear-free zones and to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to place strict limits on the size of national armies, and to forswear territorial claims against their neighbors;
- and, perhaps most important, providing massive economic aid to the republics.

If, writes Motyl, the Western democracies do not undertake such measures, which will help promote human rights and civil liberties, they should at least consider the sobering thought of having to live with ten Mozambiques east of the Oder-Neisse line (in Mandelbaum, ed., pp. 60–61).

Developments leading up to the restoration of sovereignty in the Baltic countries, and events since then, suggest that powerful and enduring ascriptive phenomena—language, culture, history, and religion—are the primary bases of Baltic nationalism. As Harold Isaacs has written, an ethnic group's language, culture, and shared historical experiences (the components of what he calls "basic group identity") are vital to the psychic and social well-being of its members.[10] An individual's identity, personality, and value system are shaped by group affinities, religious beliefs, and other phenomena that social theorists on both sides of the old Iron Curtain have deemed "premodern."

Encounters with Soviet Russia over the past 50 years have profoundly shaped expressions of Baltic nationalism, but deep and abiding "premodern" emotional attachments predating the Bolshevik Revolution are of first- not second-order importance. National revivals in the Baltic region from the early 19th century to World War II, resistance to Soviet occupation, the appearance of popular fronts in the late 1980's, and the final struggle for independence all suggest the existence of powerful common bonds, shared national identities. These, in turn, underlie the quest for democracy and for political pluralism.

[9]"Polish Deputy: Dissolving Councils Violates Law," *Rzeczpospolita* (Warsaw), Sept. 12, 1991, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (Washington, DC), Sept. 19, 1991, p. 46.

[10]Harold Isaacs, *Idols of the Tribe*, New York, Harper and Row, 1975.

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Central European Security

Joshua B. Spero

CHARLES GATI. *The Bloc That Failed: Soviet–East European Relations in Transition.* Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1990.

MICHAEL J. SODARO. *Moscow, Germany, and the West from Khrushchev to Gorbachev.* Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1990.

ANDREW FELKAY. *Hungary and the USSR, 1956–1988: Kádár's Political Leadership.* New York, Greenwood Press, 1989.

AUREL BRAUN, Ed. *The Soviet–East European Relationship in the Gorbachev Era: The Prospects for Adaptation.* Boulder, CO, Westview, 1989.

THE 1989 revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe came full circle with the failed coup d'état in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from August 19 to 21, 1991. One of the results of these revolutions is the rapid change in European security structures. Although it was noted by surprisingly few among those observers following the extraordinary pace of change, the mid-February 1991 summit of Hungarian Prime Minister József Antall, Czech and Slovak Federal Republic President Václav Havel, and Polish President Lech Wałęsa in Visegrád, Hungary, had already marked the beginning of an entirely new kind of security mechanism. At Visegrád, for the first-time in the post–Warsaw Pact era,[1] democratically elected leaders from what has become known as the Triangle[2] convened to sign a declaration on cooperation. They promised to undertake concerted efforts to integrate their region into the new Europe,[3] and to collaborate on security policies —including coordination on military issues.

Nearly seven centuries ago, the Polish, Bohemian, and Hungarian kings met at Visegrád and similarly agreed to cooperate to reduce tension throughout this region.[4] Even though the Visegrád meeting of 1335 failed to ensure long-term peace in the region, it represented an attempt by Central European

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[1]At the June 7, 1990, Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee meeting in Moscow, Hungarian Prime Minister József Antall declared his country's intention to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, stating that it was "a remnant of European confrontation [that] has lost its main function." See "Hungary's Antall Addresses Meeting," MTI (Budapest), June 7, 1990, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: East Europe* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-EEU*), June 8, 1990, p. 10. The January 1991 meeting of Warsaw Pact foreign ministers in Budapest sounded the death knell for the alliance. See F. Luk'yanov, "The Fate of the Warsaw Pact Is Being Decided," *Izvestiya* (Moscow), Jan. 24, 1991.

[2]For the sake of consistency, the term "Triangle" will be used to denote Hungarian-Czech/Slovak-Polish cooperation. In discussions with the author over the past year, specialists from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland who have been involved in negotiations among the three countries have used the term "Triangle" to describe the Visegrád cooperative mechanism.

[3]"Declaration Accepted at the Tripartite Summit in Visegrád," MTI, Feb. 15, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Feb. 19, 1991, p. 4.

[4]See references to the 14th-century meeting in Visegrád of Robert Charles of Hungary, John, King of Bohemia, and Casimir, King of Poland, in the "Ceremonial Declaration," MTI, Feb. 15, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Feb. 19, 1991, p. 5. For accounts of the 1335 meetings and their agreements, see, among other works, Arminius Vamberg, *Hungary: In Ancient, Medieval, and Modern Times*, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1886, pp. 162; and Denis Sinor, *History of Hungary*, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1959, p. 90.

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leaders to set aside their differences, solidify cultural bonds among their peoples, and negotiate agreements to strengthen their governments and countries. The meeting of 1991 had the same goals. As Prime Minister Antall emphasized, "common culture, common economic striving, and similar political institutions" enable the Triangle to cooperate.[5] President Havel also stressed shortly before the Visegrád summit that ". . . we must not try to overtake one another on this road to Europe. . . . The success of any of our countries can be seen as a success for all of us."[6] President Wałęsa added that although ". . . our countries differ and are advancing on different roads. . . . [if] we cooperate, and we are destined to cooperate, the road leading to Europe will be faster and less bumpy, and our joining Western civilization will be easier and cheaper."[7]

Despite ethnic disputes and territorial tensions that have long plagued relations among them,[8] these countries are intent on drawing upon common political ideals and similar dissident and underground experiences to overcome 45 years of Soviet-imposed rule. Through cooperative efforts, the Triangle countries believe they can forestall the emergence of instabilities stemming from both the Central European region itself and from the turmoil that is resulting from the breakup of the Soviet Union. Such cooperation also stems from the need to enhance capabilities for the Triangle's political, economic, and military integration into Europe.

Indeed, in the wake of the disintegration brought about by the failed coup attempt by Soviet hard-liners in mid-August 1991, the Triangle began to form a regular consultative group to expedite its "full integration" into West European political and economic structures and to promote more actively "equal security" and "human rights" throughout the whole of Europe.[9] These efforts were strengthened by a joint proposal of US Secretary of State James Baker and German Minister of Foreign Affairs Hans-Dietrich Genscher to implement a "Euro-Atlantic pact from Vladivostok to Vancouver."[10] Encouraged by the US-German statement, the Triangle leaders declared in the October 6, 1991, "Kraków Declaration" their desire to extend relations with both the European Community (EC) as associate members and to seek something more than "diplomatic liaison" status with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).[11] The "Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation," issued by the heads of state and government in NATO, signals their serious commitment to increase Central European, East European, and post-USSR integration into NATO's security structure.[12]

THE dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Economic Mutual Assistance (CEMA) ended the postwar bipolar security system in Europe.[13] Europe is now in the

[5]"Antall on East European Development," PAP (Warsaw), June 5, 1990, in *FBIS-EEU*, June 6, 1990, p. 38.

[6]Tibor Kis, "Havel: Joining Together," *Népszabadság* (Budapest), Feb. 13, 1991, translated in *FBIS-EEU*, Feb. 19, 1991, p. 1.

[7]Miklós Ritecz, "Wałęsa: Let There Be an Opening," *Népszabadság*, Feb. 13, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Feb. 19, 1991, p. 1.

[8]For background on the evolution of some of the security problems facing the Visegrád declaration signatories and some of the implications for their future security, see Joshua B. Spero, "The Warsaw-Prague-Budapest Triangle: Central European Security After the Visegrád Summit," Fort Leavenworth, KS, Foreign Military Studies Office/European Military Studies Office, forthcoming. See also Ewa Boniecka, "Poland Plus Two," *Życie Warszawy* (Warsaw), Jan. 26–27, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Jan. 31, 1991, pp. 34–35; and Rudolf L. Tőkés, "The New Democracies of Central Europe: Cooperation, Competition, and Coexistence," presented at the international workshop on "Formulation of New Security Policies for Central Europe," Budapest, June 13–14, 1991 (participants from the defense ministries and some of the leading institutes and universities from the Triangle countries, Western Europe, and the United States participated in the workshop).

For good overviews of some of the difficulties inherent in Central European security cooperation, see Curt Gasteyger, "The Remaking of Eastern Europe's Security," *Survival* (London), March/April 1991, pp. 111–24; Andrew A. Michta, "East-Central Europe in Search of Security," *SAIS Review* (Washington, DC), Winter-Spring 1991, pp. 59–72; John Orme, "Security in East Central Europe: Seven Futures," *The Washington Quarterly* (Washington, DC), Summer 1991, pp. 100–01; and Hans Binnendijk, "The Emerging European Security Order," ibid., Autumn 1991, p. 77. Although Gasteyger and Michta question the effectiveness of Central European regional security efforts within a broader, more important, and still evolving collective security system in Europe, their articles were published before details of the Visegrád summit could be incorporated into their analyses.

[9]For information regarding the Triangle's emergency meeting in Warsaw on Aug. 20, 1991, to assess the Soviet coup d'état, to discuss the secret mobilization of Triangle armed forces, and to strengthen their coordinated approach toward the European Community, see "Polish, Hungarian, and Czech Ministers Meet," DPA Communiqué (Warsaw), Aug. 20, 1991; Maria Wągrowska, "State of Alert Called Off: Interview with Defense Minister Piotr Kołodziejczyk," *Rzeczpospolita* (Warsaw), Sept. 11, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 17, 1991, pp. 23–25; Peter Michielson, "Interview with Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski," *NRC Handelsblad* (Rotterdam), Sept. 4, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 11, 1991, p. 21; the interview with President Václav Havel, "Unity Instead of Tussles," *Lidové Noviny* (Prague), Aug. 20, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Aug. 22, 1991, p. 7; Hungarian foreign minister Géza Jeszensky on Kossuth Radio Network (Budapest), Aug. 21, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Aug. 22, 1991, p. 12; and Mary Battiata, "Three E. European Nations Discuss Soviet Crisis," *The Washington Post*, Aug. 22, 1991.

[10]"Joint Statement by Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany," US Department of State, Washington, DC, Oct. 2, 1991.

[11]"The Kraków Declaration," Section II, p. 1, Oct. 6, 1991, Kraków, Poland.

[12]"Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation," issued by the heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Council, Rome, Nov. 7–8, 1991.

[13]For behind-the-scenes views of the Warsaw Pact's demise, see Jerzy Rajch, "The Twilight of the Blocs: An Interview with Grzegorz Kostrzewa-Zorbas, Deputy Director of the European Department, Ministry of Foreign

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process of moving to a new, multipolar security system based on bilateral and multilateral arrangements like the Triangle.[14]

The four books under review place in historical context the demise of the Warsaw Pact and the CEMA and help us to understand some of the security implications of the emerging Budapest-Prague-Warsaw cooperation. In *The Bloc That Failed,* Charles Gati presents a broad picture of the Soviet leadership's inability to enforce its rule over the new governments that emerged in Central Europe as a result of the revolutions of 1989. He found that the satellite regimes fell when their foreign protector—undergoing a reform phase—withdrew its support. The result was the destabilization of those despised and illegitimate regimes and the loss of their hold on power. Michael Sodaro develops this last thesis thoroughly and meticulously in his comprehensively documented *Moscow, Germany, and the West from Khrushchev to Gorbachev,* which covers Soviet relations with both East and West Germany from the construction of the Berlin Wall to Germany's October 1990 unification.

Hungarian-born Andrew Felkay chose to focus on the relationship between Moscow and another of its former "satellites." Although Felkay looks at Hungary mainly from the perspective of long-time Hungarian leader János Kádár, he also draws upon his own experiences. Finally, Aurel Braun's edited compendium on Soviet–East European relations divides the works of its prominent contributors into two sections, one on Soviet perspectives and one on East European concerns. Braun's lengthy conclusion integrates all the chapters with a historical overview of Soviet–East European relations, a prescient analysis of the reforms in these countries, and a discussion of the prospects for regional cooperation.

Several of the books trace the antecedents of the changed Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe. Gati (pp. 80–82, 164–66), Sodaro (esp. pp. 333–34, 354, 360–61), and Karen Dawisha in Braun (p. 15) all stress the importance of the policy reassessments toward Eastern Europe advocated by Gorbachev's advisers. These works reflect the conventional wisdom, which assumes that changes in the Soviet–East European relationship in the mid- to late 1980's resulted from the influence of such people as Eduard Shevardnadze, Aleksandr Yakovlev, Georgiy Shakhnazarov, Nikolay Shishlin, Valentin Falin, Oleg Bogomolov, Aleksandr Bovin, and Vyacheslav Dashichev.

Although changes in Soviet policy were significant, the works under review stress that it was not Soviet policies but the overwhelming rejection of Marxism-Leninism by the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe that led to the revolutions of 1989 (Gati, p. 190; Sodaro, pp. 404–05; and Andrzej Korbonski, in Braun, pp. 69, 71). But inasmuch as the illegitimacy of East European communist regimes was long a feature of political life in the region, the question then becomes why these revolutions occurred in 1989 and not earlier. Gati contends that we must look to the Soviet domestic crisis, which prevented Moscow from sustaining its imperial domain in Eastern Europe (p. 189). The use of force in the midst of this crisis, says Gati, would have jeopardized the very existence of the USSR. Without the USSR's threat or use of force to crush internal reform movements, the communist regimes in Central Europe quickly lost power.

The Soviet foreign policy goal of replacing "orthodoxy with reform" in Eastern Europe in the late 1980's failed because Gorbachev's advisers overestimated the prospects for socialism's renewal in Eastern Europe and misread Eastern Europe's aspirations for freedom from communist rule and Soviet domination. Harbingers of such change were evident as early as 1984, when Mátyás Szűrős, then the Hungarian communist party secretary responsible for international relations, argued that notwithstanding "extreme circumstances, . . . the national interests of the individual socialist states were more impor-

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Affairs," *Żolnierz Wolności* (Warsaw), Sept. 6, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-EEU,* Oct. 16, 1990, p. 7; and "Antall Speaks on Plan to End Warsaw Pact," Budapest Domestic Service, Oct. 16, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-EEU,* Oct. 18, 1990, p. 13. For the agreements ending the Warsaw Pact, see "Protocol Ending the Validity of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance Signed in Warsaw, May 14, 1955, and of the Protocol Extending its Validity Signed in Warsaw, April 26, 1985," *Izvestiya,* July 3, 1991; and "Communiqué," ibid.

For the final session of the CEMA, see "CEMA Is Ended and Not to Be Superseded by an Organization of International Economic Cooperation," Interfax (Moscow), June 27, 1991, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-SOV*), July 2, 1991, p. 6; and Moscow Central Television First Program Network, "Organization Disbands," June 28, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV,* July 2, 1991, p. 6.

[14]High-level foreign and defense ministerial meetings have been indicative of the developing stages in Triangle security cooperation. For information on meetings of the three Triangle foreign ministers, who discussed, among other important security issues, coordination of bilateral treaty negotiations with the Soviet Union, see "Polish, Hungarian, and Czech Ministers Meet," loc. cit.; Luk'yanov, loc. cit.; "Treaty Coordination with USSR," ČTK (Prague), June 25, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU,* June 26, 1991, p. 10; and "Discuss Soviet Treaties," ČTK, June 26, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU,* June 27, 1991, p. 12. For descriptions of the defense ministerial meeting that focused on increasing trilateral military cooperation and consultation, see "Kołodziejczyk Meets Hungarian, Czech Ministers," PAP, Aug. 2, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU,* Aug. 5, 1991, p. 28; M. Kireyev, "Meeting in Kraków," *Krasnaya Zvezda* (Moscow), Aug. 6, 1991; and "Minister Discusses Regional Security, Technology," MTI, Sept. 25, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU,* Sept. 26, 1991, p. 20. Since March 1991, Triangle defense ministers have concluded their three respective bilateral military declarations. See also Brigitte Sauerwein, "Reforming Central European Defense: Neither Vacuum nor Buffer," *International Defense Review* (Geneva), No. 8, 1991, pp. 799–801.

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tant than the unity of the socialist camp" (Sodaro, p. 308). Mikhail Gorbachev's admonition to Erich Honecker on October 8, 1989 (the 40th anniversary of the founding of the German Democratic Republic), in East Berlin that "Life punishes those who come too late" spelled the beginning of the end of the division of Europe (Sodaro, p. 378).[15] This statement prompted the Hungarians, Czechoslovaks, and Poles to reject Moscow's "unrealistic goal" of transforming its "sphere of domination based on the imposition and exercise of force [into] a sphere of influence" dependent on "voluntary concessions and mutual interests" (Gati, p. 194) and to pursue independence from the USSR.

Gati held that in the aftermath of the revolutions of 1989, the "new geopolitical reality" and the "unpredictability" of a potentially "convulsive Soviet Union" would necessitate "novel security arrangements" in Eastern Europe (p. 230). These "novel security arrangements," however, have a history that predates the fall of communism. As Melvin Croan points out in Braun and Felkay mentions in passing (p. 279), in the 1970's and 1980's, ties were fostered among Central European opposition movements on the basis of a common "cultural identity." The leaders who rose from these movements to positions of political power since 1989–90 are linked by this identity, which Croan believes provides an "integrating force" for regional ties (in Braun, p. 128). Gati argues as well that these relationships and a common cultural identity laid the foundation for "... the creation of a Central European or a Danubian confederation" (p. 200).

SINCE the publication of the books under review, the Central European region has witnessed accelerated efforts by Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland to cooperate. Thus, one of the main questions to address in view of increasing "Central European" and "Danubian" cooperation is what kind of security structures will replace the Warsaw Pact and the CEMA.[16]

The antecedents[17] for contemporary triangular cooperation and the summits at Visegrád and Kraków (October 5–6, 1991) evolved from the summit at Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, on April 9, 1990.[18] However, this initiative to expand dialogue and understanding at the highest levels among Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary ended in more disagreement than cooperation.[19] Tensions over resurgent nationalism, ethnic minority disputes, and divergent European integration strategies surfaced among the Central Europeans. Many of the leaders who raised such points of contention in Bratislava, however, were either defeated in subsequent elections or replaced before Visegrád.[20]

Though the Bratislava meeting witnessed an outbreak of pent-up nationalistic tensions among Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, and Poles, it also symbolized the potential for the newly emerging democracies to work together. Given the positive impact of change and restructuring then occurring in the USSR, President Havel, foreign minister Jiří Dienstbier, and other

[15]For the rationale underlying Gorbachev's decision to support Honecker's removal from power, see the background paper by one of Gorbachev's former reformist advisers, Vyacheslav Dashichev, "The Concept of an All-European House and the German Question," delivered in East Berlin during April 1989 in preparation for Gorbachev's visit to West Germany. For a published version, see *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg), Feb. 5, 1990, pp 142–58.

[16]Space limitations preclude extensive examination of the types of bilateral and multilateral cooperation involving the Triangle to emerge over the past several years. To summarize, in addition to its triangular relationship, each member has initiated bilateral ties with countries throughout Europe and the world. All three countries belong to the *Hexagonale* Group, made up of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European Community (EC) member Italy, neutral Austria, and nonaligned but disintegrating Yugoslavia. The *Hexagonale* Group has been primarily concerned with trade, cultural, and environmental issues. Furthermore, the Poles have played a role in the rebirth of the Baltic or Hansa Group, with members from Scandinavia, Germany, the newly independent Baltic countries, and Russia. These regional groupings and their ongoing efforts to promote stability for future European integration are examined at length in Phillip A. Petersen, "The Challenge to Soviet Strategic Deployment: An Emerging Vision of European Security," in Bruce George, Ed., *Jane's NATO Handbook 1990–91*, Couldson, Surrey, Great Britain, Jane's Information Group, Inc., 1990, p. 30; and Christopher D. Jones, "Czechoslovakia and the New International System," in Jeffrey D. Simon, Ed., *European Security Policy After the Revolutions of 1989*, Washington, DC, National Defense University Press, 1991, pp. 307–30. See also "We Are Revising the Warsaw Treaty," an interview with Polish foreign minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski, *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Warsaw), July 26, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, July 27, 1991.

[17]Early Triangle cooperation can be traced back to CSFR initiatives. President Havel stated that "synchronized" efforts should be made for the CSFR, Poland, and Hungary to return to Europe. See "Havel Advises 'Synchronized' Return to Europe," ČTK, Jan. 27, 1990, in *FBIS-EEU*, Feb. 6, 1990, p. 14. See also Jones, loc. cit., for a thorough review of the European "security agenda" promoted by Havel and his foreign minister Jiří Dienstbier since early 1990.

[18]The April 1990 Bratislava meeting brought together regional leaders not seen in the capital of Slovakia since the 1806 Bratislava Peace Treaty meeting. See Prague Domestic Service, Apr. 9, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Apr. 10, 1990, p. 4.

[19]This meeting also brought together the Italian, Yugoslav, and Austrian foreign ministers as observers, to form, at that time (with the Czechs and Hungarians), the *Pentagonale* Initiative.

[20]For more elaboration on some of these tensions over ethnic minority rights, see Mátyás Szűrős, as quoted in Budapest Domestic Service, Apr. 9, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Apr. 10, 1990, p. 7; and Szűrős as quoted in Armin Wolf, "Report on the Summit," Vienna Domestic Service, Apr. 10, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Apr. 10, 1990, p. 13. However, Hungary and the CSFR did agree to a joint statement that forms the basis of rights granted to ethnic minorities in both countries. For reference to this statement, see Evelyn Forro, Budapest Domestic Service, Apr. 9, 1990, in *FBIS-EEU*, Apr. 10, 1990, p. 7. For variations in European integration strategies among the Central European leaders at the summit, see the "Bratislava Summit News Conference," Prague Domestic Service, Apr. 9, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Apr. 10, 1990, pp. 8–11.

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Triangle leaders realized the time had come to regain their countries' historical roles in the heart of Europe. As the Polish press emphasized, this first summit allowed Central Europeans ". . . to believe that our countries may return to Europe through the road used by Spain, Portugal, or Greece, from dictatorship to democracy, from poverty to wealth."[21]

Many dramatic events overtook Europe during the short interval between Bratislava and Visegrád as Germany began its unification process and power increasingly devolved from the central USSR government to its republics. During his June 1990 visit to Washington, newly elected Hungarian Prime Minister Antall advocated Central European support for German unity in order to gain future German backing on economic integration into Europe.[22] Growing Polish concerns over continued separation from Western Europe's emerging security structures and, particularly, Poland's position between an economically powerful Germany and an increasingly unstable USSR, also underscored the necessity for expanded Triangle ties.[23]

The Polish foreign ministry believed there was a practical and pragmatic need to encourage Triangle cooperation to reduce its increasing worries about isolation. By July 1990, it determined that growing Polish-CSFR border traffic, for example, required a better cooperative mechanism. Therefore, the Poles initiated a series of high-level discussions among Triangle members. In July 1990, they jointly sponsored a proposal with the Czechoslovaks and the East Germans to attempt to "institutionalize the pan-European process."[24] The purpose of this initiative was to create an institutionalized mechanism whereby ministers and experts within the Triangle would consistently coordinate political, economic, social (ethnic), and security policies. While this was one of the harbingers for establishing the CSCE's Center for the Prevention of Conflict in Vienna, it was a meeting of Triangle deputy foreign ministers in Warsaw that led to this turning point before Visegrád.[25]

On October 17, 1990, deputy foreign ministers Jerzy Makarczyk (Poland), Imre Szokai (Hungary), and Lubos Dobrovský (CSFR), who became minister of defense the following day, convened in Warsaw at the Polish foreign ministry's initiative. The goal was to create a consultative committee meeting at the deputy foreign ministerial level in order ". . . to facilitate the solution of common problems in the region." Working groups were established not only to prepare what later became the "Visegrád declaration," but also to implement regular Triangle meetings.[26]

In late January 1991, the three Triangle foreign ministers met in Budapest for the first time together to discuss withdrawing from the Warsaw Pact. The meeting produced a path-breaking joint communiqué that expressed "deep concern" about the January 1991 violence in Vilnius, Lithuania, and Riga, Latvia,[27] stating that " 'This attempt to reverse the peaceful transition to democracy and a rule-of-law-state' threatens stability in Central and Eastern Europe." Moreover, Czechoslovakia not only declared its intention to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, but it recommended that the Pact be dissolved. Coupled with a statement in support of the Western coalition against Iraq in the Persian Gulf war, the Triangle's foreign ministers clearly intended to undertake united, coordinated efforts that were designed to attract attention in the East and in the West.[28]

On January 21, Hungarian defense minister Lajos Für met his CSFR counterpart Dobrovský in Prague to sign the first of the bilateral military agreements among Triangle members. Both defense min-

[21]Adam Michnik, PAP, Apr. 9, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Apr. 12, 1990, p. 48.

[22]"Interview with Newly Elected Hungarian Prime Minister, József Antall," PAP, June 5, 1990, in *FBIS-EEU*, June 6, 1990, p. 38.

[23]See a speech to the Polish parliament by Polish foreign minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski in which he expressed concern about Germany as an "economic giant" and the USSR as a "great military arsenal" that is "stricken by economic collapse." "Skubiszewski Addresses Sejm on Security Issues," Warsaw Domestic Service, Feb. 14, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Feb. 15, 1991, pp. 29–30.

[24]"In Favor of Establishing Pan-European Institutions," *Hospodářske Noviny* (Prague), July 12, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, July 16, 1991, p. 2.

Given their concerns over economic dependency on Moscow, the Hungarians disagreed about the extent of institutionalizing such mechanisms and were reluctant to initiate this particular proposal. These concerns were expressed in meetings of the author with Hungarian security policy officials in Oslo, Norway, in February 1991; and in Warsaw, Poland, and Budapest, Hungary, in June 1991.

[25]The importance of establishing a mechanism for regular high-level discussions among Triangle members was emphasized by Polish foreign ministry officials. The CSCE Center for the Prevention of Conflict would function as a "forum for exchanges of military information, discussion of unusual military activities, and the conciliation of disputes involving CSCE member-states." See "London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance," issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in London on July 5–6, 1990, NATO Information Service, B-1110, Brussels, p. 7.

[26]Budapest Domestic Service, Oct. 18, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Oct. 22, 1990, p. 1. Interviews by the author with Grzegorz Kostrzewa-Zorbas and Andrzej Ananicz, deputy director for Central Europe, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Warsaw, Poland, on June 12, 1991, and with Ivan Baba, director of policy planning, Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Budapest, Hungary, June 18, 1991.

[27]See Luk'yanov, loc. cit. The Triangle was responding to the deaths resulting from mid-January 1991 clashes between supporters of Lithuania's and Latvia's independence, who were defending their parliaments and communications centers, and the central government's security forces.

[28]Ibid.

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isters decided to normalize relations between armies, institute regular contacts, and establish several confidence-building measures. They agreed that early notification on troop deployments or large-scale military exercises would reduce potential misunderstandings or conflicts.[29] Furthermore, "disproportionate" force deployments on their Western borders necessitated redeployment under both countries' new defensive doctrines. Für and Dobrovský maintained that their new bilateral military relationship needed to be "free of secrecy" and, thus, they would work together to avoid any misperceptions about troop maneuvers. They also declared that, through "common effort," their commitment to aid the Western coalition's fight against Iraq would lead Hungary to send a medical unit, and the CSFR, a chemical warfare defense unit, to the Persian Gulf.[30] These may have been little more than symbolic commitments to the world outside of Central Europe, but it demonstrated that, even under extreme economic limitations, the Triangle countries were trying to integrate into Western security mechanisms.[31]

THESE undertakings set the stage for the Visegrád summit. The "Declaration on the Cooperation of the Hungarian Republic, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, and the Republic of Poland on the Road to European Integration" signified the beginning of a new security entity. Having agreed that Central Europe must not be perceived as a future "gray, buffer, or neutral zone," Antall, Havel, and Wałęsa resolved that united efforts among Triangle members would benefit their own countries as well as Europe.[32] In addition, by early 1991, these leaders expressed a belief that, to varying degrees, their countries faced a strategic threat from the instability, disintegration, and collapse of the USSR. (This fear proved well founded in light of the attempted coup by Soviet hard-liners.) Finally, the three leaders were concerned about the new political-economic role, influence, and power of a unified Germany. It was against the backdrop of these international developments that the Hungarian, Czech/Slovak, and Polish leaderships established the "Visegrád" mechanism to better coordinate their evolving policies.

The Visegrád declaration proposed the Triangle's "total integration into the European political, economic, security, and legislative order" through the "restoration of independence, democracy, and freedom" in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. By abolishing the "economic and spiritual structures of the totalitarian system," each leader believed that "parliamentary democracy," "modern constitutional states," and "human rights and fundamental freedoms" could be realized in their respective countries. The declaration stated that "The coordination of [the Triangle's] efforts—bearing in mind their distinct national characteristics—increases the chance of achieving the desired results." The means by which the Triangle will attempt to reach these goals include: new trading mechanisms, creation of conditions for the free exchange of information, publications, and cultural goods and values, coordinated development of telecommunications networks, protection of minority rights, and establishment of environmental guidelines. As a result, it is ". . . on the basis of their individual concerns and interests, [that all] shall harmonize their efforts to foster cooperation and close relations with European institutions and shall consult on questions concerning their security." The declaration emphasized, however, that the Triangle's "cooperation in no way disrupts or limits their existing relations with other states, nor is it in any way directed against the interests of any other state."[33]

In the summit's aftermath, however, it was not entirely clear either how the new "Visegrád" mechanism would structure "security" cooperation or how the leaderships would respond to crises affecting their countries, either separately or collectively. Antall tried to clarify any misperceptions that the Triangle represented an integrated alliance. He stressed that the primary purpose of the declaration on cooperation was to facilitate the Triangle's achieving "associate status" with the EC, and that it should not be seen in Europe as "a new organization."[34] Havel, by contrast, offered a more ambiguous state-

[29]Peter Vajda, "Interview with Defense Minister Lajos Für: More Information from the Gulf," *Népszabadság* (Budapest), Jan. 22, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Jan. 25, 1991, p. 39.

[30]Poland also sent hospital and rescue ships as part of its commitment to the Gulf alliance. Nearly 200 medical personnel accompanied the ships. See "Skubiszewski Addresses Sejm on Security Issues," loc. cit.

[31]See Vajda, loc. cit.

[32]In the Polish defense ministry, Janusz Onyszkiewicz, one of the few senior civilian defense military officials, recently commented that if the region became a "gray zone," Poland would again witness "sharp competition between other states" that would lead to "detrimental" internal policies. Furthermore, "The collapse of the Warsaw Pact does not mean a reduction in our security at all. One should remember that membership in the Pact would have drawn us into a major war, and this war would not have been in defense of our vital interests." Quoted in Andrzej Medykowski, "Emerging From the 'Gray Zone'," *Polska Zbrojna* (Warsaw), July 25, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Aug. 2, 1991, p. 29.

[33]See "Declaration Accepted at the Tripartite Summit in Visegrád," loc. cit.

[34]István Kulcsár, "Antall Summarizes Summit," Budapest Domestic Service, Feb. 15, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Feb. 19, 1991, pp. 5–6.

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ment on the issue of a military alliance. He said that if Central Europe were faced with an "external threat," its leaders would not only be consulting trilaterally, but might also be providing "mutual assistance or something similar" to each other.[35]

Polish foreign minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski also attempted to explain that the Triangle would not become a "military alliance," but would be a mechanism for "loose cooperation." To reduce concerns in Western Europe and Moscow,[36] Skubiszewski stated that the Triangle would work to strengthen "stability" and "security" in Central Europe. He stressed that triangular security coordination primarily meant closely consulting on the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and CEMA and on the friendship and cooperation treaties being negotiated between Moscow and Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest, respectively. At the same time, he emphasized that Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia would not render any "immediate [military] assistance" to each other to meet an impending threat. He did say, however, that bilateral military agreements would underpin military relations among the three countries.[37]

Shortly after Visegrád, two military bilateral agreements were signed between Poland and its two Triangle counterparts. Defense ministers in both cases were careful to point out that the agreements neither represented a new military pact, nor were they a substitute for the defunct military structures of the Warsaw Pact. According to Dobrovský, the military agreement signed on February 27 between Czechoslovakia and Poland ". . . has no aspect of establishing military cooperation in case of threat." It is intended to lay the foundation for increasing information flows between both countries and coordination on arms modernization.[38] Polish defense minister Piotr Kołodziejczyk reiterated that ". . . our agreement is not directed against any country in Europe or the world. We wish to support each other in reforming and perfecting our armed forces, because they are still necessary." The two countries signed 18 agreements covering such areas as military exchanges, training, and joint research.[39]

On March 20, Poland and Hungary signed their bilateral military agreement. It stipulated that there would be exchanges to share experiences, officer training assistance, and equipment purchases. Kołodziejczyk commented that "we have a common interest in speeding up the disarmament processes that were initiated in Vienna—that is our most important task and the best recipe for ensuring security in Europe."[40]

BEFORE the August 19–21, 1991 coup d'état and resulting collapse of the USSR forced policy-makers and security specialists to focus almost entirely on internal cohesion, initial Soviet reactions to the Visegrád summit and its resulting declaration had been mixed. Some USSR security specialists cautiously supported the evolving triangular cooperation; others expressed age-old fears and paranoia. Some Soviet commentators believed that Triangular cooperation enhanced security and stability similar to the contributions made by the *Hexagonale* Group's increased commercial, technological, ecological, agricultural, and cultural ties.[41] For example, Nikolay Shishlin dismissed any concern over a possible threat to the Soviet Union and stated that ". . . the Prague-Budapest-Warsaw triangle . . . presents no danger whatsoever—especially from the point of view of security policy . . . for the Soviet Union." Furthermore, he said that parts of the Soviet population remain "contaminated by imperial thinking" and ". . . continue to consider Eastern Europe as their own sphere of interest, without even thinking through what the real interest in this region is for the Soviet Union."[42] Other Soviet views also underlined the need to overcome "the bloc mentality . . . so deeply ingrained in our consciousness that we sometimes keep faith with it even when we want to say the opposite."[43]

[35]As quoted in MTV Television Network (Budapest), Feb. 15, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Feb. 19, 1991, p. 11.

[36]Before the coup d'état demonstrated the extent to which the right wing of the Soviet Communist party would go to preserve its power and privileges, the CPSU Central Committee's International Department had released a hard-line document on Soviet strategy toward Eastern Europe. In it, the conservatives lashed out at those East European leaderships who appeared to threaten "the military security of the USSR" through their contacts and increasing ties to Western organizations and governments. See "On the Development of the Situation in Eastern Europe and Our Policy Toward That Region," *Izvestiya TsK KPSS* (Moscow), No. 3, 1991.

[37]See "Skubiszewski on Cooperation with Hungary, CSFR," PAP, Apr. 17, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Apr. 18, 1991, p. 29; and "Skubiszewski on Cooperation with Prague, Budapest," *Rzeczpospolita*, Apr. 18, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Apr. 23, 1991, p. 32.

[38]"Defense Ministers of Czechoslovakia and Poland, Lubos Dobrovský and Piotr Kołodziejczyk Sign Agreement on Main Trends of Cooperation in the Military Sphere," ČTK, Feb. 27, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Mar. 4, 1991, p. 17.

[39]Wiesław Rosala, "A Working Visit by the CSFR Foreign Minister," *Polska Zbrojna*, Feb. 28, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Mar. 5, 1991, p. 30.

[40]"Polish-Hungarian Military Accord," *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Warsaw), Mar. 21, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Mar. 27, 1991, p. 26.

[41]Aleksandr Bovin, "Political Observer Opinion: Military Cooperation Ending," *Izvestiya*, Feb. 28, 1991; and A. Yazkova, "Two Days Without Allies; No War So Far," *Komsomol'skaya Pravda*, Apr. 2, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Apr. 9, 1991, p. 4.

[42]Gabor Izbeki, "Political Scientist Who Works in the CPSU Central Committee," Budapest Domestic Service, Mar. 24, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Mar. 25, 1991, pp. 22–23.

[43](Fn. 43 follows on p. 148.)

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Other Soviet specialists were more skeptical. One observer stated that without the Warsaw Pact, the Triangle would face increasing obstacles concerning the modernization of military equipment. Because each Central European army had nearly identical Soviet-designed armaments and equipment, the Triangle would be required to exchange experiences in personnel training or possibly hold joint exercises with Moscow. The Triangle should also be expected to bow to Moscow's sensitivities regarding future "security partners" (NATO). Finally, should the Central Europeans attempt to buy Western technology, they would suffer from a lack of training on such "unfamiliar and expensive equipment." Consequently, there were good reasons to maintain cooperation between Central Europe and the Soviet Union.[44]

Before the August coup attempt, security specialists from both the USSR and the Triangle generally contended that regional security should not be conducted in a post–Warsaw Pact "vacuum." One Soviet view advocated "preservation of the consultative structure" based on the Warsaw Pact's old mechanism for exchanges of information in lieu of the "dash toward Europe" and establishment of new security ties.[45] This argument assumed that political, economic, and ethnic instability in the Triangle countries should preclude membership in the EC and NATO.[46] Another Soviet commentator expressed concern that the Triangle's "orientation" toward Western Europe would push it into NATO, thereby directly threatening the USSR.[47] Both arguments are examples of the hard-line thinking of the past.[48]

Since the aborted coup attempt, however, USSR foreign minister Boris Pankin has stated that "We cannot fail to welcome the fact that neighbors [the Triangle] are looking for new forms of cooperation and that they are coming closer together."[49] The collapse of the USSR has therefore impelled the Visegrád signatories to coordinate much more closely in order to resolve their security problems. By late August, the Triangle had stepped up efforts to institutionalize security cooperation and accelerated its quest to join the EC and NATO together rather than separately.[50] Since Visegrád, Central European countries have engaged in "systematic political cooperation" and consultations to gain admission to the EC, both among themselves and between each Triangle country and individual West European states.[51]

This also increasingly took place against the backdrop of the virtual collapse of the Soviet market and the steep rise in prices for Soviet energy, upon which each of these countries remains dependent.[52] But as Paul Marer (in Braun, pp. 98, 100) and Braun (p. 183) contend, decreased Central European access to Soviet energy and raw materials in the mid- to late 1980's may have been a blessing in disguise. Marer and Braun maintain that before the CEMA's demise, Soviet economic restrictions pushed the Central Europeans to implement marketizing reforms, which ultimately put them in a better position to compete outside of the CEMA trading mechanism. Although severe economic problems need to be resolved, the Triangle has at least begun to develop the economic prerequisites for joining the

[43]Valentin Sharov, "Viewpoint: Troika in Central Europe," *Pravda* (Moscow), Jan. 25, 1991; and F. Luk'yanov, " 'Triple Alliance' in Eastern Europe," *Izvestiya*, Feb. 16, 1991.

[44]Senior Lieutenant S. Yegorov, "Poland: Looking for a New Defense Concept," *Krasnaya Zvezda*, May 9, 1991.

[45]Yazkova, loc. cit.

[46]To a certain extent, this Soviet reasoning, although overtaken by the collapse of the USSR, recognized some of the historical problems and enmities stirring beneath the surface in the Triangle: tensions and a possible break between the Czech lands and Slovakia; the rising concerns over an economically strained Polish economy caught between a stabilizing Germany and the emerging Baltic countries and restive Russia, Belorussia, and Ukraine; and the civil war in Yugoslavia and the unrest in Romania bordering on anxious Hungary.

[47]L. Kliusa, "Halfway Point Still Ahead," *Krasnaya Zvezda*, Mar. 27, 1991.

[48]Yazkova, loc. cit.

[49]"USSR's Pankin Meets Slovak Officials, Press," Československý Rozhlas (Bratislava), Oct. 4, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Oct. 7, 1991, p. 10.

[50]See "Polish, Hungarian, and Czech Ministers Meet," loc. cit. and "The Kraków Declaration," loc. cit. At the October 5–6, 1991, Kraków summit, each Triangle country signed agreements on "good neighborly relations, solidarity, and cooperation." Earlier, CSFR President Havel and Polish President Wałęsa met in Prague, where a joint communiqué was signed. It stated that ". . . the West would be expected to finance exports of East European goods to the Soviet Union by direct payment to the three countries (Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary) and not by granting credits to the Soviet Union. See ČTK, Sept. 11, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 12, 1991, p. 12. See also "Jeszenszky Meets Polish, Czech Ministers in Moscow," MTI, Sept. 11, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 11, 1991, p. 13. At this meeting, these officials discussed "The relation toward the EC, the new bilateral contracts to be concluded with Moscow, and cooperation [among] Budapest, Warsaw, and Prague."

[51]See "Skubiszewski on Cooperation with Hungary, CSFR," loc. cit. There are disagreements within the EC regarding associate membership for the Triangle. These disagreements have to do with the question of access for Triangle exports to EC markets, but they also reflect concern that admitting the Triangle to associate status would prompt requests for admission by other, even less-developed countries in Europe, especially Russia, with its massive size, problems, and needs. See the harsh rebuttal by Danish foreign minister Uffe Elleman-Jensen to the French EC delegation in Sten Jensen, "Tough Words Against the EC," *Berlingske Tidande Sondag* (Copenhagen), Sept. 8, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 11, 1991, p. 51.

[52]See "On the Development of the Situation in Eastern Europe and Our Policy Toward That Region," loc. cit., for elaboration on the "Soviet energy weapon" as a strategic instrument to control Eastern Europe's economic future. See also "Trade With Eastern Europe Continues to Decline," Interfax, Sept. 25, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 26, 1991, pp. 12–14.

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EC by carrying out difficult economic reform programs.

Antall had stated in Visegrád that competition among markets was vital for developing "the free movement of capital and labor" and for pursuing "the acquisition of property." The Hungarian Prime Minister stressed that all three countries would broaden "market conditions" and "ownership relations" internally as well as across their borders in order to become associate members of the EC.[53] Some of the measures that the Triangle hopes will lead to enhanced cooperation with the EC include the development of a free-trade zone, the formation of a joint bank to expedite currency exchange, the creation of a finance and credit corporation, and the modernization of the transportation systems connecting the three countries.[54]

Once Poland gains membership in the Council of Europe (a certainty following the October 27, 1991, parliamentary elections), a political prerequisite for associate status in the EC (not to mention membership in the West European Union and NATO), Warsaw will join Budapest and Prague as members of this organization. In Antall's view, this further consolidates triangular political relations, demonstrates to West Europeans the region's increased stability, and marks another stage toward the Triangle's peaceful integration into Europe.[55]

THE struggle to implement economic stabilization and reform programs has, by necessity, also driven the Triangle leaderships to broaden their understanding of national security. In addition to its traditional military-technical or war-fighting dimensions, national security has taken on economic, socio-cultural (ethnic), and environmental dimensions as well.

This expanded view of national security comes into play when considering the newest concern for Triangle security policy-makers—the disintegration of the USSR. In post–cold war Europe, Triangle security issues initially reflected the euphoria over liberation from Soviet domination. This period was, however, extremely short-lived, and in recent months, security concerns have shifted focus from the outcome of the Soviet Communist party's struggle to preserve its monopoly of power to the following: the possibility that a turbulent transition in the former Soviet Union could give rise to economic instability, massive refugee problems, and ethnic conflict that could spill across borders. In addition, the problems of how to utilize or discard Soviet assets left behind in each Triangle country after Soviet military withdrawals; of how to reach financial settlements with Moscow that take into account the environmental damage caused by the Soviet presence and the military assets left behind by Soviet forces; and of how to compensate Poland for the transit of Soviet troops from Germany back to the USSR remain.[56]

Triangle policy-makers and security specialists believe that instability in the former Soviet Union threatens emerging democracies and market reforms in their region and, for that matter, stability in Europe as a whole.[57]

The Triangle envisions strengthening its ties to Europe by increasing its commitment to the CSCE. In turn, as an indication of the importance the CSCE attaches to Central Europe, it has established its newly created Secretariat in Prague, an election-monitoring center in Warsaw, and a conflict-prevention center in Vienna.

NATO has also pledged to increase its support for the CSCE. In their 1991 Copenhagen declaration, NATO foreign ministers promised to strengthen their organization's relations with the CSCE, to enhance their role vis-à-vis Central and Eastern Europe, and thus to establish a commitment on the part of NATO to work for the security of the whole of Europe, including the Soviet Union.[58]

For its part, Moscow has viewed the CSCE as having an important role to play in the security of Europe. Currently, CSCE is the only cooperative security structure that serves as an umbrella organization for the US, USSR, and other European states. It is also a mechanism for discussions on political, economic, ethnic, and environmental issues.

DESPITE their efforts to become integrated into all-European institutions, as mentioned above, Triangle policy-makers and security specialists fear being caught in a "no man's land" or "security vacuum," or fear being seen merely as "buffer states." They are concerned about

[53]See Kulcsár, loc. cit.; and József László, "Interview with Hungarian Prime Minister József Antall," Budapest Domestic Service, Feb. 16, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Feb. 19, 1991, p. 12.

[54]"Interview with Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski: The Necessary Will to Cooperate," *Národná Obroda* (Bratislava), June 25, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, July 3, 1991, p. 23.

[55]Kulcsár, loc. cit.; and László, loc. cit.

[56]"Skubiszewski on Cooperation with Prague, Budapest," loc. cit.

[57]For example, see "Wałęsa Discusses Soviet Situation With World Leaders," PAP, Aug. 20, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 2, 1991, p. 20.

[58]See the "Statement Issued by the North Atlantic Council Meeting in Ministerial Session, Copenhagen, June 6–7, 1991. At a press conference following the meeting, US Secretary of State James Baker stated that "We believe that the principles we have announced will make it clear to the Soviets and to the Central and East Europeans that NATO is serious about reaching out to former adversaries to build an atmosphere of trust and cooperation across Europe." Press Conference by Secretary of State James Baker at the Conclusion of the Ministerial Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, Bella Conference Center, June 7, 1991.

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being left alone to face an unstable Soviet Union on one side and an economically powerful Germany on the other. Participation in the CSCE will not provide the kind of comprehensive security sought by the Triangle, although it certainly can facilitate working together in order to strengthen the political, economic, and security (defense) capabilities of the Triangle countries. This cooperation advantageously positions the Triangle vis-à-vis Western security mechanisms. Of necessity, however, these states will look to NATO as the oldest and most reliable security alliance in Europe.

Already in July 1990, NATO's London declaration had paved the way for discussions between East and West on evolving security policy.[59] All the former Warsaw Pact countries, including the USSR, have established "regular diplomatic liaison with NATO" and security discussions take place on a regular basis. Equally important, by developing bilateral and multilateral relations with West European countries, particularly with Germany, the Triangle governments dramatically broadened the scope of their security policies.[60]

The October 2, 1991, Baker-Genscher statement and NATO's Rome declaration attest to a commitment to strengthen ties to the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe and the evolving Soviet Union. Its recommendations focus on "formalizing" ties between NATO members and the new democracies by integrating the "liaison" countries into regular ambassadorial, ministerial, and working-level meetings. Participation in NATO's political and economic committees, Atlantic Policy Advisory Group policy-planning sessions, civilian emergency planning sessions, and "Challenges of Modern Society Committee" meetings would all enhance civilian and military exchanges. This expanded arena would allow for discussion on such issues as refugee programs, disaster relief, defense conversion, and expanding NATO-CSCE relations.[61] In attempting to "formalize" the Visegrád declaration in Kraków, the Triangle underscored its determination to "extend relations" with NATO in accordance with the Baker-Genscher proposal and to strengthen the CSCE process and its institutions.[62]

The Triangle's desire to attain membership in Western security organizations and institutions, particularly in NATO, threatened to place them in an awkward position vis-à-vis what is left of the USSR. Until recently, Moscow had insisted on a clause in the friendship and cooperation treaties with Warsaw, Prague, and Budapest that would ban the Triangle countries from joining an alliance directed against the USSR, i.e., NATO and possibly even the EC. One Soviet security specialist had suggested that instead of joining these institutions, Triangle members forge a "collective security agreement" founded on "complementing the Helsinki Final Act." Individual states or groups of states could seek "security guarantees" and "legal help" by means of a collective European mechanism to be developed through the CSCE. According to this strategy, a new "iron curtain" could be avoided through "the gradual expansion of West European security structures in Eastern Europe," thereby reducing the potential for conflicts in Central and Eastern Europe, or "more likely in the USSR."[63] The Triangle rejected such clauses and arguments as infringements on their sovereignty. After the August coup attempt, Moscow no longer insisted on the inclusion of the clause. Bilateral negotiations should yield

[59]See London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance, loc. cit.

[60]The German-Polish Treaty on Good Neighborliness, Friendship, and Cooperation, signed on June 17, 1991, stipulated that, inter alia, guarantees for territorial integrity, border inviolability, political independence, economic development—particularly German support for Poland's efforts to obtain EC associate membership—and equal minority rights for citizens living in each other's countries. This solidified the agreement between both countries on the permanence of their postwar borders. See ADN (Berlin), June 17, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-WEU*, June 18, 1991, pp. 6–13.

Czechoslovak and German leaders have also sought to establish closer ties by signing a friendship and cooperation treaty. Although tensions exist over the status of the Sudeten Germans and the question of Slovak independence, both countries have tried to overcome historical ethnic and territorial disputes in order to reach a better understanding. See "Treaty Between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic on Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation (Extracts)," ADN, Oct. 7, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Oct. 10, 1991, pp. 11–14; "Dienstbier: No To Slovak Demand on FRG Treaty," *Mladá Fronta Dnes* (Prague), Sept. 18, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 20, 1991, p. 13; "Sudeten Germans Reject Treaty With CSFR," ADN, Sept. 20, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-WEU*, Sept. 30, 1991, p. 23; and Jiří Vejvoda, "Conversations at Lany: Interview With President Václav Havel," Československý Rozhlas, June 23, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, June 24, 1991, pp. 11–12.

Hungary has also developed strong ties to Germany. (Hungary has even been described by some Germans as ". . . a main bridgehead on the way toward East European markets.) See "Foreign Ministry Secretary Views Regional Security," MTI, May 8, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, May 9, 1991, p. 16; "Antall Continues Visit; Kohl to Visit Hungary," DPA, July 11, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-WEU*, July 12, 1991, p. 23; and "Kohl Views Possible Hungarian EC Membership," MTI, July 22, 1991, in *FBIS-WEU*, July 23, 1991, p. 10.

[61]See "Joint Statement by Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany," loc. cit. The NATO summit in Rome on November 7–8, 1991, will consider the provisions of the Baker-Genscher statement as it defines its new mission in post–cold war Europe.

[62]See "The Kraków Declaration," loc. cit., Section II, p. 1.

[63]Csilla Medgyes, "Interview With Sergey Karagonov, Deputy Director of the USSR Institute of Europe: Europe Needs Collective Security," *Magyar Hirlap* (Budapest), June 15, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, June 19, 1991, p. 15.

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friendship and cooperation agreements with Moscow in relatively short order.[64]

During this past year, as Braun presaged (pp. 150–51), Central European policy-makers have also developed increasingly important relations with the Soviet republics. It was hoped that ties to the republics would help prevent instability on the Triangle's eastern borders. Even before the August 1991 coup attempt, a number of agreements were signed between the Triangle countries and some of the republics of the USSR.[65] After the coup, the Triangle countries quickly recognized the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania,[66] and it can be expected that expanded and more intense relations with Belorussia, Ukraine, and the Russian federation will follow.[67]

ALTHOUGH in the past year the Triangle has made great strides in formalizing efforts at regional cooperation, questions remain about the evolution of the Triangle's cooperation in all its dimensions, but particularly national security. Moreover, for the Triangle's role to be enhanced in European security, it will have to develop a mechanism for lessening international tensions and responding to potential flashpoints—particularly mass migration—whose source lies mainly in instability in the East.[68]

As the books under review show, the antecedents for this cooperation can be found in the links among Polish, Czech, and Hungarian dissidents during the communist period. Present motivations for this cooperation include the desire to confront together the challenge of being locked in a region that has traditionally been a focus of competition between Russia and Germany, and to the desire to rectify some of the historical animosities that so often ended in war and the destruction of Central Europe. As Polish President Wałęsa put it:

We should not represent any threat to Germany, the Soviet Union, or to each other. In military terms, we must deploy for defense, rather than offense. As I said before, not against someone, but to deter, and to preserve our revolutions, our democratic achievements, and our development.[69]

This proactive stance is shared by Hungarian and Czechoslovak leaders. It will play a critical role in the emergence of a stable security regime in Central Europe, in Europe as a whole, and from "Vancouver to Vladivostok."

[64]"Foreign Ministry Official on Talks in Prague," MTI, Sept. 13, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 17, 1991, p. 23; "Envoy Interviewed on Soviet Treaty Preparations," Kossuth Radio (Budapest), Sept. 25, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Oct. 2, 1991, p. 20; "Dienstbier, Pankin Sign Cooperation Treaty," Československý Rozhlas, Oct. 3, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Oct. 4, 1991, p. 7; and " 'Breakthrough' in Soviet Relations Reported," PAP, Oct. 7, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Oct. 8, 1991, p. 28.

[65]See the "Declaration of Friendship and Good-Neighborly Cooperation Between the Polish Republic and the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic," reprinted in *Poland in Europe*, Warsaw, Polish Senate Center for International Studies, Summary of Issues 3 and 4, September 1990–January 1991; "RSFSR-Polish Declaration of Friendship Signed," TASS, Oct. 16, 1990, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Oct. 17, 1990, p. 61; "Declaration on the Principles of Mutual Relations and Cooperation," original copy of the agreement signed between Boris Yel'tsin and Czech and Slovak Federal Assembly Chairman Alexander Dubček on May 14, 1991; "Hungarian-RSFSR Protocol Signed," MTI, Aug. 28, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Aug. 29, 1991, p. 12.

Prior to August 1991, agreements had also been signed between the Triangle countries and the western Soviet republics, including the Baltics. See, for example, "Declaration of the Principles and Main Directions of Development of Polish-Ukrainian Relations," in *Poland in Europe*, op. cit., pp. 38–41. "Zlenko on Relations With Hungary, Center," Radio Kiev International Service, July 11, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, July 16, 1991, pp. 93–94; "Republic Signs Cooperation Accord With CSFR," Interfax, Aug. 5, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Aug. 8, 1991, p. 54.

[66]For the Triangle countries' recognition of the independence of the Baltic countries, see "Federal Government Recognizes Baltic Independence," Československý Rozhlas (Prague), Aug. 29, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Aug. 29, 1991, p. 5; "Diplomatic Relations with Baltic States Restored," MTI, Sept. 2, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 3, 1991, p. 15; and "Diplomatic Ties with Latvia Restored," PAP, Sept. 2, 1991, in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 2, 1991, p. 25; "Diplomatic Relations Reestablished with Estonia," PAP, Sept. 10, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 11, 1991, p. 20; and "Diplomatic Ties With Lithuania Reestablished," PAP, Sept. 5, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Sept. 6, 1991, p. 22.

[67]Concern over control of nuclear weapons and adherence to European arms control agreements in the post-USSR have arisen internationally since the aborted Soviet coup attempt. These issues will increasingly become essential to future Triangle relations with Belorussia, Ukraine, and Russia. For discussion of control over nuclear weapons, see Peter Kasparov, "Konstantin P. Morozov Favors Retaining Nuclear Arms," Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks, Sept. 17, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 18, 1991, p. 66.

[68]For Triangle concerns over mass migration in the aftermath of the failed Soviet coup, see Michielson, loc. cit.; and "Hungarian, CSFR, Polish Refugee Offices to Cooperate," Kossuth Radio Network, Sept. 29, 1991, trans. in *FBIS-EEU*, Oct. 8, 1991, p. 1.

[69]Cited in Ritecz, loc. cit.

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